

photos of Ethel Barrymore and other favorites
August 1907

PRICE 10 CENTS

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE



Published Monthly by THE RED BOOK CORPORATION, CHICAGO.
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THE WAY OF WRATH L. AL... M:14... K

"THE HOW AND WHY OF MOTORING"

The unprecedented success of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE, its extraordinary popularity throughout America, are due to two causes:

First: It has published just the sort of fiction the magazine readers like best of all;

Second: It has kept three speeds forward of the great line of magazines behind.

So, in the next issue, it will throw the throttle wide open—with a clear road ahead—and inaugurate an innovation that will send it swiftly on beyond any possibility of approach in even greater popularity.

In the September number will be introduced a distinct department devoted to automobiling, under the title "The How and Why of Motoring."

Unquestionably automobiling is the one supreme pastime of present day America. Nothing ever evolved in the way of sport or recreation is in fitter keeping with the genius of American life—the zeal to go forward—to get things done—to eliminate the element of time. The motor car is the symbol of the present age whether its purpose be that of pleasure or utility. It is the new thing in motion just as THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE was the new thing in magazines at the time of its establishment.

Now has come the motor car, operated for pleasure or for profit, in the broader sense. THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE arrived at the conclusion a year ago that it must in its pages reflect something of this new and vitally American pastime of motoring. It at once secured the best motoring stories the fiction-market afforded. But the fiction writers have not been able to keep abreast of the motor's popularity, so THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE has decided that in duty to its readers—whose entertainment is its purpose—it must devote a certain number of its pages to the subject of motoring quite apart from the spark and throttle fiction it may print.

In every issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE, therefore, beginning with the next—the September—number there will be found a department of several pages devoted exclusively to such matter as is best designed to interest the amateur motorist, the intending motorist, and indeed, all who seek to learn that which will be of greatest value to them concerning the every day use of motor-cars. Everything pertaining to motor development—everything the interested person wants to know, will be covered in this complete department. The motor situation the world over—the practice of motoring—advice, suggestions, news—in a word the motor world will be focused in THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE'S new and unique department. And what is best of all, the entire department will be written in such a way that it can not miss being understood by the laity—the motorists of tomorrow as well as those who drive their cars to-day. The technical argot of motoring will be studiously avoided.

When it was decided that such a department was absolutely necessary to THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE if it would serve its full purpose as the greatest magazine of entertainment in America, the entire list of motor writers—specialists who would be qualified to do the work as it must needs be done to realize the plan evolved—was gone over. From the really large number of experts qualified to conduct the department, that man, who by knowl-

edge, magazine-experience, and ability, seemed the one man selected. He is Mr. E. Ralph Estep. Mr. Estep has since 1897 had but one interest in active motoring. An ac-

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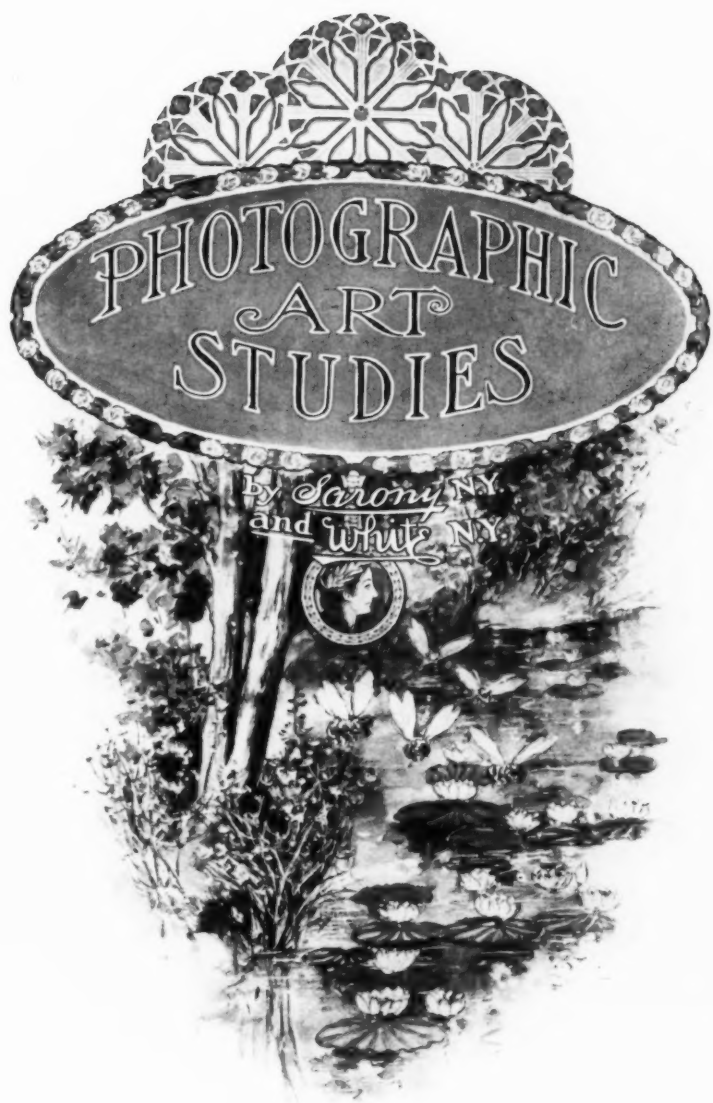
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Miss Elsie Jants in "The Vanderbilt Cup" Photo by Hal N. Y.

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Miss Elsie Jants in "The Vanderbilt Cup" Photo by Hal N. Y.





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PHOTOGRAPH BY *White* N.Y.

MISS BELLE ASHLYN







PHOTOGRAPH BY *White* N.Y.

MRS. MAUDE HARDEN













PHOTOGRAPH BY White N.Y.

MISS MAY WARD





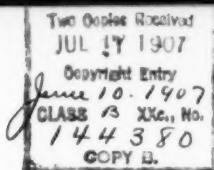




DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

Miss Norman came down in a long opera-wrap

See "The Strategy;" page 483



THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

Vol. IX

August, 1907

No. 4

The Impulse of the Moment

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

Author of "Shopping with Katharine," etc

THE INSTANT Yarringford saw her he was consumed with a desire to know her. Had he asked himself if it were her beauty alone which had attracted him—a beauty of so rare and effulgent a type as to create comment anywhere—he might have answered in the affirmative; but he knew, nevertheless, that it was something alien to her physical charms which caused the strange sensation at his heart.

She had not seen him. Far down at the end of the great drawing-room she stood talking with a man whom Yarringford did not know; indeed, most of those at the Clement reception were total strangers to him. He had come to New York only that morning, on important business connected with his mining-interests in the West, and a sudden impulse had made him telephone Margaret Clement immediately after his arrival at the Holland House.

"So this big, throbbing city seems lonely to you!" Margaret had laughed over the wire. "Oh, you great, husky baby! Then my reception will cheer you up. But come and dine with Horace and me quite *à jamille* first. We'll make you forget your loneliness."

And these old friends, whom he had not seen for years, certainly had dissipated that awful feeling of solitude which strangers in great cities come to know at once.

It had been a long time since he had been East, and longer still since his presence in New York had been necessary. Only on his occasional trips abroad had he come to the metropolis, and then simply to catch his steamer. There were memories

connected with the place which he tried not to revive—memories of his married life, the early years of which had been happily spent here where life seemed to rush gladly and madly on its way. He had never cared to revisit New York, and after the first months of poignant sorrow over his young wife's death, he had gone West, and, in the excitement of new ventures and vast enterprises, he had in some measure erased the grief that lay on his heart. And to his surprise the great West thrilled him and inspired him as the East had never done. Fresh interests arose, new horizons loomed large before him, and he was slowly trying to forget the sharpness of his sorrow.

To find himself, after so many years, again under the spell of the big town that he had known so well, made him wonder at his return of enthusiasm. He had spent an exhausting day, seeing real captains of industry, consulting with them, parleying with them, arranging for future meetings, and the carrying out of more important projects. The quiet dinner with the Clements had come like a cooling breeze at the end of a hot summer day. To meet these old friends once more in this serene and comfortable way; to drink Horace's rare old sherry; to note the wonderful bloom still on Margaret's cheek and listen to her light laughter; to smoke one of Horace's fine cigars—ah, this was life as it should be, Yarringford thought, and it was good to get back to New York, after all.

Rather late the people began to arrive at Margaret's reception, and her one guest at dinner was not sorry for this. It suited the

easy ways of a man just crossing the forty-five-year milestone, to lean back in an old friend's armchair and watch blue rings of smoke and talk over the sadly distant days when they had been a little younger together.

Somewhat later he found himself being presented to one after another of Margaret's friends, and the thought flashed over him how really terrible it was, that of all the people he met only a few were familiar to him. This was the penalty of living one's life in a city like New York. The older friends drifted away, quite as naturally as in small towns they stayed on; and here new friends were swept up on one's hearthside out of the ever-changing sea of human beings, or went by one's hospitable shore, just as Fate dictated. There was little choice, and less need of it. What did it matter? New acquaintances could be formed at a moment's notice—especially if one had wealth and charm and grace of manner, like Margaret Clement.

Suddenly, among all those faces, he saw the one face that held him—the one woman who made his heart leap and thrill. How different she seemed from all the rest!

He was standing near his hostess when her eyes first attracted his notice.

"Who is that beautiful woman, Margaret—the one leaning a bit forward now with the black fan in her hand?"

Mrs. Clement turned, interested at once, as every woman is, in the slightest emotion displayed by a widower or a bachelor.

"Oh, that is Alice Morrison. Some people consider her the handsomest woman in New York. She is the wife of Philip Morrison, the banker. You must know of him. They are very rich."

Yarrington stood drinking in the beauty of the woman they were discussing. Each movement of her arm, each turn of her throat, seemed familiar to him, and those lines of Rossetti's flashed through his mind:

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell.

He was so absorbed in the mere contemplation of her loveliness that he did not at once realize the import of Margaret's words. No woman had interested him at all since his wife's death, but now he heard himself saying:

"Present me, Margaret, won't you?"

The man who had been talking with Mrs. Morrison when Margaret and Yarrington came up, effaced himself utterly. His ready withdrawal seemed to Yarrington a move by Providence on life's little checkerboard—the shifting of a pawn to make room for a knight; but he loathed himself for the foolishly egotistical simile.

When two people meet for the first time, their immediate conversation is filled with banalities, and both Yarrington and Alice Morrison were conscious of a swift falling into the inevitable remarks which precede a friendship.

Then he told her how, a few moments before, those lines of the poet had come to him, and she looked up in surprise.

"You know Rossetti?" she inquired, unable to keep from her tones the astonishment she felt.

"Why not? I am not a poet myself; I am, sadly enough, a commonplace financier. But no one demands that the lover of music be a musician, and I can appreciate poetry, as all of us can who have lived."

"You could not have said a truer thing. Poetry, I have always thought, is only another word for Truth."

"But the saddest part of it is that we come to realize that only when we are beginning to grow old—or older."

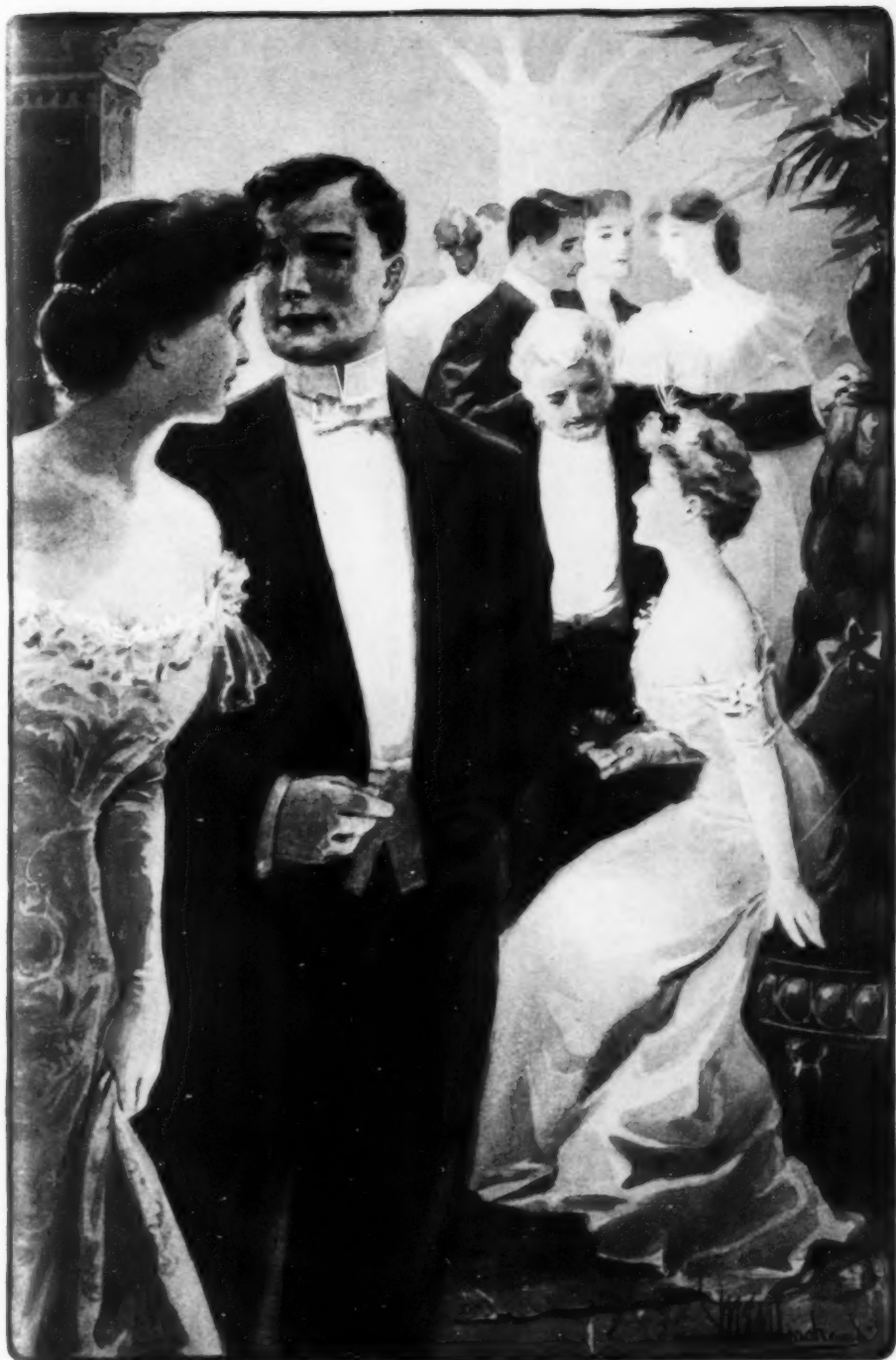
"I have known it some time," she laughed, "yet I am not old."

"Of course not," he answered, noting the youthful glow on her cheek that seemed the hue of a rose-leaf, "but you must be wise beyond your years; for it takes a certain wisdom to appreciate poetry—I mean poetry beyond the 'Maud' stage!"

She smiled, and a light came into her eye—the light that reveals a sense of humor. In that instant Yarrington felt gladly akin to her. There is nothing that so quickly seals a friendship as laughter. Their talk drifted on.

"You, I know," Mrs. Morrison said, "are one of the men who do things—whose life is full of busy days. I have often wondered if those like you ever think of us women, and how many hours of emptiness we must know."

He looked at her, taken aback by her sudden frankness. Surely a woman as beautiful as she could spend no lonely hours. She saw his surprise.



DRAWN BY J. N. E. MARCHAND

"Who is that, Margaret?"

"Oh, don't think me silly to talk this way to you. Once in a long time a woman finds a man to whom she feels she can say certain things, because she knows he will understand. I am not speaking on the impulse of the moment."

"I am sure you are not. If you were, you would say even more. I have thought of what you just said, because, long ago, I—I had a wife. And after she died, I often thought of the many times I left her alone—thoughtlessly, of course. Women, I learned to realize, haven't the capacity for making the best of solitude."

"I am glad one man has come to know that. My husband—why, he adores me, yet I find days and days passing by when I never see him. He is a very busy man. He loves his work, his tremendous interests, just as you do; and he loathes—this," glancing around the brilliant room. "Society, as we know it, palls upon him. He would not come here to-night, for instance, though truly he was legitimately kept away by a sudden meeting of his board of directors."

"And no doubt he was glad of the excuse to be absent. How well I can understand his feelings! Had I not been lonely in this vast city, I, too, would not have been here, much as I enjoy seeing my friends, the Clements."

"But think of me—and of women like me! You can stay away, yes; but what could I do at home, my husband gone, no children to be with me, no club to go to," again she laughed. "So many evenings come like this to a woman in a big city—long wastes of hours, sad deserts of silence, which somehow, anyhow, she must cross. We grow so tired of it all!"

Yarrington looked at her a moment without saying a word. There was a note of pathos in her voice which went to his heart. It seemed incredible that any man should remain long absent from such a woman; and yet he remembered his own shortcomings, in the early years of his married life—those years when he had to forge ahead, to work with Herculean zeal as his responsibilities grew.

"He loves you, I know he must," he said at last. "But a woman wants the expression of her husband's love. I suppose many a woman has wept over such lines as:

"The days go by, and not a word from you."

"Ah! there is no need to explain to a man like you," Mrs. Morrison said. "Rossetti and Hafiz at your tongue's end—you must understand all I mean."

"Indeed I do," he answered. "My life has been a very lonely one, too, for many years. But I have always been sorry for the women who are lonely—they have more time to brood, to question, to lose heart. Still, when one is loved—"

"Yes," she said quickly, "as I am loved—that is a great deal, but it is not all. Women bask in the sunshine of adoration, but when the corroding element of jealousy enters in, they are miserably unhappy."

"Your husband loves you, and is jealous of you? That is perfectly natural."

"To a certain point—yes. But jealousy may verge on insanity, I often think. Indeed, I think it is a minor form of insanity, don't you?"

"I hardly know. I loved my wife devotedly, and I am sure I was jealous of her—"

"But not to a degree of madness," Mrs. Morrison interrupted. "Surely you had sense enough to know that your wife could look at another man and have no thought of loving him?"

She spoke earnestly, looking sharply into his eyes—those deep-set gray eyes which must have lit up many times, she knew, like forge-flames.

"Of course," Yarrington replied, "I would not allow such a stupid passion as jealousy to take hold of me. All men should cherish the woman they love, but they should not hold her down with ropes of steel. It would be for the woman to rebel, gloriously, in such a case, it seems to me."

"Suppose she had—to no purpose. What then?"

He paused. Then, "It would depend on how much she loved her husband."

"And if she did—yes, very much?"

"Then I should say their lives might run on evenly."

"Oh, so evenly!" she cried.

"The level of every day," again he quoted, and they knew once more how well they understood.

"Here we two have met, for instance," she said, "utter strangers, but at a good

friend's home, and impulsively we turn to each other, in a whole roomful of interesting people, and talk in this way. Isn't it strange?"

"Not so strange after all. We do many things impulsively; the greatest crises in our lives, I believe, are reached and met through impulse. Some people think slowly, deliberately, before they commit any act, either worthy or unworthy. Nine times out of ten they hesitate, and when we hesitate we are lost. I wanted to know you to-night. I know you better now than I ever dreamed I should."

She smiled into his eyes.

"You are a woman who lives and thinks," he went on rapidly, "and thinks well. Your impulse was to tell me a little of yourself to-night, and you did so. Are you sorry?"

"Not at all," she answered quickly; and she held out her hand to him, as a man might have done. "But I am thinking—" she hesitated.

"Yes?" he queried.

"I am thinking how strange it has all been, and how strange indeed my husband would think it."

Yarrington laughed.

"If he is at all as I imagine him, he would not mind."

"Then you do not understand, after all!" She smiled. "He would care very much."

"Let us test that—let me take you home and I will meet him."

She started.

"Why, how absurd!"

"But why absurd? There is nothing we have said that we could not have spoken of in his presence."

She looked at him keenly.

"I should like—just once—to do it," she said.

People were beginning to leave. Even as she uttered the last words, Margaret Clement came toward them, and there was that general movement throughout the room which indicates that the moment for adieux had come. Out in the street they could hear the hoarse carriage-calls of the men.

She came down from the dressing-room, more lovely, he thought, in her cloak and hood than she had been before. Little riotous curls forced their way from her head-covering, caressing her brow.

"How foolish we are!" Alice Morrison said to him in the carriage.

"Why?" said Yarrington, as he watched the fairy lights of the avenue and the wonderful electric-signs that flashed here and there—everywhere—through the light mist that hovered over the city.

"It is very late, I fear, and of course Mr. Morrison will have come home and gone to his room."

"Then I will leave you at your door," Yarrington laughed.

"This is almost an adventure," the woman beside him said, as if to herself, wholly ignoring his suggestion.

They said no more for several squares. A soft rain had begun to fall, and through the shining pavements Yarrington thought how beautiful was the reflection of the seemingly endless chain of lights. Another city, faint yet perfectly visible, lived and suffered beneath the wet streets.

Of the butler who opened the door for them, Mrs. Morrison inquired if her husband had returned.

"Not yet, ma'am. He telephoned a half-hour ago that he would be in very soon."

"Then you must wait, Mr. Yarrington."

"I lit the fire in the library," the man ventured. "It seemed chilly, ma'am."

"Very good, Harkins. That is all."

The library opened from the main hall, and as Yarrington and his hostess turned to enter the room, both with their coats still on, the bright blaze confronted them. Over on a table littered artistically with books, a red lamp stood. There were no other lights in the room.

Mrs. Morrison, with her cloak thrown partly from her shoulders, sank into a great chair in front of the fireplace. Yarrington took one of the volumes under the lamp in his hand. It was, oddly enough, "The House of Life." He looked over at her, a smile upon his lips; but she was staring absently into the flames.

"He will be here soon," she murmured. "We have been as foolishly impulsive as children."

Yarrington sat down near the fire, putting his hands out to the warmth.

"You wish me to go?" he half-questioned.

"No—no, indeed. But—"

"What is it?"



DRAWN BY J. N. E. MARCHAND

"There is nothing to understand," Yarringford said

"I wonder if Philip will care. It was raining, you know. But I might have sent you down to the Holland in the cariage."

There was a world-weariness in her voice, and here, in her own home, he felt they were not quite so *en rapport*; yet Rossetti was near them, even in their hearts, and every other great poet must be standing around them in that beautiful room!

"You are troubled now. We were foolish—I was, I mean."

"Because of our confidences?"

"No; because of this. Knowing how you feel, I should not have come."

Still she gazed, absorbed, into the flames.

"No, no!" suddenly she said. "It was I who was foolish. But Philip will have to understand."

She closed her eyes for a moment.

"There is nothing to understand," Yarringford said.

"I am very tired," she answered.

He did not reply, but gazed at her sitting there before the fire, marveling once more at her loveliness. She was tired of the sham of life, and how sorry he felt for her—a woman who went on, year after year, playing her part in the social game of lies, forever concealing her *ennui*. Yes, she must be very tired.

A clock chimed somewhere in the hall, and in the room just back of the library, he could hear the butler drawing down a shade. The servants were evidently going to bed. He heard faint footfalls, as if they were ascending by distant stairs.

Still she did not stir, and he only looked at her, unconscious how the moments were slipping by.

This was the woman who was so loved by Philip Morrison, and of whom he was so unreasonably jealous. Well, it would be rather interesting to meet such a man.

Suddenly he realized that he had forgotten, in the contemplation of her, all about the husband; and, remembering all she had said, he smiled to think how odd it would be to have Morrison come into the room and find his wife asleep—for now she was undeniably asleep—and he sitting there with her.

He did not wish to disturb her. He did not wish to spoil the beauty of the picture she made with the firelight on her superb face and hair. She would awaken in a moment, he felt sure, and again they might renew their talk.

He sat there, absorbed in the perfection of her beauty. It was not strange, after all, that Morrison should be so insanely jealous of her. Why, he himself. . . .

The clock chimed again, softly, but she did not stir. Then he heard—yes, it was a key in the heavy door. . . . Morrison. Still she did not move. He spoke to her, but she never stirred. How tired she must have been! He heard the key again.

It was absurd, this situation. He tried to smile, but it was strange how his effort failed.

He got up, but the woman in front of the fire did not hear him. He heard the door open at last in the hall. Why did the noise not arouse her?

Prompted by an impulse—an impulse he never could explain in all the years to come—he stepped into the room back of the library, where the butler had drawn down the shade. A screen was there, which partly concealed a buffet. This he saw only dimly, for there was no light.

He cursed himself the moment he had committed his hasty and foolish act. Those words he had said to her earlier in the evening came back to him now: "The greatest crises in our lives, I believe, are reached and met through impulse." Was he foolish enough to think that this was to be a crisis in his life?

Foolish—yes, everything was foolish in this world—all he had said to-night, all she

had said, perhaps; surely all the unreasonable jealousy that Morrison felt for her. But there was no way to change things now. He had done something utterly foolish on the impulse of the moment—everybody had, at some time in their lives, he remembered with relief. She would awaken as soon as her husband came into the library, and she would think her guest had left while she slept, being unwilling to disturb her. Morrison would never know of his presence—his innocent presence.

He heard the man close the door after him and take off his coat. Then he heard him cross the hall and, from where he stood, he could see him enter the library and glance for a brief moment at his wife.

He was exceedingly good-looking; but Yarringford knew at once that all his wife had told of him must be true. The sharp eyes were those of a man who lived with suspicion close in his breast; the firm chin denoted determination to carry out any purpose.

Evidently Alice Morrison awakened in the moment when her husband stood looking at her.

"Why, Philip!" he heard her cry.

"Have you been asleep, dear—and were you waiting up for me?" He kissed her. "It wasn't necessary. The meeting kept me longer than I thought."

In the gladness of seeing her husband she must have forgotten all about Yarringford. He could not see them, but he could feel the pause that followed. His heart almost stood still. What was she doing as she realized his absence? Would her husband read her thought in her face? He prayed that she would reason quite as he had done. It would be all right, and Morrison need never know. After a while they would go, and he could slip from the house—like a fool.

He stood, unable to make the slightest movement, and the moments seemed hours.

Then, "I'm tired," he heard Morrison say. "I'll take a little brandy—won't you have some too, Alice?"

He did not hear her answer; but instantly the man approached the very room wherein he was standing. The brandy must be on the buffet.

Yarringford heard the other turn on an electric-switch, and immediately the room



DRAWN BY J. N. E. MARCHAND

"Thank you, lady," he said

was flooded with light; but for a second he was not observed.

Morrison impatiently pushed aside the screen, and then the men stood face to face.

Neither spoke. There was a terrible instant of silence. Morrison's face went as pale as his collar. His arms hung limp at his sides. Once he tried to speak but the words would not come. It was not that he feared this man before him; fear had no part in his make-up. Dumb wonder gripped him. Then, slowly the blood came back into his face and his hands clinched as his arms became rigid. Yarringford's eyes were blankly inquiring.

"Who are you?" Morrison finally said.

"Keep still!" Yarringford whispered, thinking of the woman so near them.

"You're a thief!" Morrison cried. "Come out of here!" And he grasped Yarringford by the throat, almost tearing his collar from his neck. The latter's overcoat swept open, revealing his immaculate evening-attire.

The screen fell to the floor, and the woman saw the men, each with a look of animal hate in his eyes. The horror of the situation as she recognized Yarringford, came over her. Was she still asleep, and dreaming?

"Here's a thief!" she heard her husband cry. And the trend of his thought flashed into her mind. He believed Yarringford to be a burglar—well, that was infinitely better than for him to know him for a friend of his wife, ignominiously concealing himself behind a screen.

"Wake the servants!" Morrison went on, "and go to the telephone for the police!"

But she did not move. She was looking in amazement at Yarringford.

Her husband was quick to notice the pause. He turned on her fiercely.

"Why don't you do as I say?" he almost yelled.

Still she stood in silence, regarding Yarringford.

Morrison's face flamed with anger. "I see it all now!" he cried.

Yarringford had given her one glance,

and in it she read more plainly than he could have uttered the message. "Save yourself."

"Philip! What are you saying? How dare you! You are quite, quite mad!"

"You mean to tell me that you do not know this man?" her husband shouted.

"You fool, you fiend!" Yarringford cried. "I am a thief—that is all. I came here to rob your house, knowing you were both away. My confederates are outside. I slipped in through the back window, but your wife came in just as I did so. I had taken particular pains to know how long you would be gone. I was taking a drink from your buffet when you caught me. Now, what are you going to do?"

Morrison, flushed with excitement and anger, stood dumbfoundedly looking at Yarringford.

"Why, Philip!" the woman suddenly cried, laughing hysterically, "see him, he is a gentleman-burglar—a Raffles! He is probably armed, and could—could kill us both!"

Yarringford saw one look she gave him, and he, too, understood. She wanted to save him from the terrible consequences that would follow.

"Yes, I'm a Raffles—the lady's right," he said. "And I am armed."

Quickly he made a motion as if to draw from his hip-pocket a revolver, and Morrison, fearful for his wife's safety, cried out:

"Stop, for God's sake! Get out of here—Get out!"

Yarringford smiled mockingly.

"Very well," he said. "Let me pass!" One hand still remained in his hip-pocket.

He moved swiftly to the hall. His hat lay on a chair where Harkins had put it when he came in.

He opened the door, while the man and wife watched him breathlessly. He gave Alice Morrison one look that she never forgot.

"Thank you, lady," he said.

Then he went out, and the rain, which now descended in heavy sheets, beat upon his face.

The Will of Klaas Brunting

BY MAARTEN MAARTENS

Author of "Dorothea," "God's Fool," etc.

THE WIND howled outside in gusts. The rain flung a fretful drizzle against the window-panes. The outlook was raw and shivery. Rebecca drew the red curtains, enclosing the golden glow of the lamp.

Klaas Brunting—old Baas Klaas—sat watching his sister's movements; sat stolid, pipe in mouth, skull-cap on head, filling, with the folds of his ample dressing-gown, his accustomed armchair by the fire. It was Saturday evening. The cat purred. The winter roses bloomed, a persistent crimson, on Klaas' carpet-slippers. He stretched out his feet to the warmth, and the cat opened a mildly apprehensive eye. But her master could get what he wanted without disturbing her. He would have disturbed her else, remorselessly, or anyone on earth, or under the earth, for the matter of that.

Rebecca stooped, and stroked the cat, speaking softly. Old Klaas watched, with a gleam under his eyelids that might have been a smile or a sneer.

"Pussy, Pussy," murmured Rebecca.

Nobody took the slightest notice.

"'Tis a miserable evening," continued the spinster.

The cat pursed up her cheeks, purring louder.

"Sam's late," persisted the cat's mistress—if, at least, she were mistress of anything in that house.

"Seven minutes," said the house's master. He drew his pipe from his projecting underlip and pointed it at nothing. "I never," he added, after a solemn pause of deliberate reflection, "was seven minutes late in my life." And he put back the pipe with a snap.

"You were always so exact. I never knew anybody quite so exact as you," spoke Rebecca wistfully. She busied herself with the tea-things, and presently she sighed.

"Yes," said old Klaas.

It was true. All his life long he had been exact, and exacting. He had worked himself up from very humble beginnings in the little town to a position of moderate importance. The cheesemonger's shop, in

which he had started in as an ill-treated errand-boy, had long since been his own. "Everybody is liable to make mistakes," he frequently declared, whereby he meant that he had never made one; and he was very indignant, or scornful, if anyone else did. Angry, when he—Klaas Brunting—lost by the other's error; scornful, when he gained. As for his sister—poor thriftless thing—he thanked Heaven he had always been able to provide for her. That, in fact, was the chiefest of his innumerable merits. Some people objected to the epithet "thriftless," when applied to the neatest and carefulest housekeeper in Valburg. But Klaas Brunting had known his sister to give a penny to a drunken tramp. He himself had been for many years a deacon, and sat where the deacons sit in church.

"Sam isn't often as late as this," resumed Rebecca, casting a glance at the loud-ticking Frisian clock.

"Likely he's waiting for the rain to stop," replied her brother. And he added, with a fierce chuckle: "As if any fool couldn't see it'll rain all night."

"Sam's no fool," protested Rebecca.

She put down her brother's second cup beside him with what was almost a jerk. Klaas' swollen cheeks indicated an internal smile. He knew, and ignored, this one weak point.

"No, Sam's a man of good practical common-sense. His judgment never runs away with him," he persisted, for he was jealous of his sister's affection, or rather, let us say, devotion, refusing to share it with anyone but the cat.

"His heart does," said Rebecca, and she went to the window, and drawing aside a curtain, peered out into the rain.

Klaas sniffed. "I suppose you know what that means," he mumbled. "But if Sam had had a business of his own, instead of being a poor clerk on fixed pay, he'd never have been out of the bankruptcy-court."

"We can't all make money," retorted Rebecca, behind the curtain. Her heart

fluttered, she steadied her voice, expecting his reply.

"No, some of us can spend the money of other people's making." Hard-headed reckoner though he was, it would never have occurred to him, nor to her, that her housewifery meant money-making for him.

But Rebecca's attention had fled to the opposite side of the street. She screamed a little scream of surprise.

"Why, he's walking up and down in the rain! Sam!"

"Pooh! He's cracked!" said Klaas Brunting indignantly. "And twenty minutes late."

"Sam! Sam!" cried Rebecca, rapping the window-pane.

"Don't break the window!" exclaimed Klaas.

"Sam! Remember your bad chest!" shrieked Rebecca.

The man on the other side of the road heard the ticking; he crossed with a little run, that bespoke a sudden resolve, and was ushered into the warm sitting-room by the expostulating old maid.

Samuel Roskam was the single and life-long, intimate friend of the Bruntings. He was of their age, between fifty and sixty, of their circle, from infancy, and their social status, almost of their family, being some sort of cousin, certainly not very much removed in anything—Rebecca could have told the exact degree of relationship. There had never been, for more than one day, twenty miles between them. But a greater distance had developed, in so far that Klaas Brunting had grown richer slowly by his own efforts, and Sam poorer, suddenly, through a brother's fault. Up to thirty—half-way through their closely connected existence—it was Sam, with his small patrimony, who had been the envied rich relation; then, one day—the whole thing compressed into twenty-four hours—Sam's brother had absconded, and written to say there was nothing left of Sam's money, and shot himself in a city hotel. Sam Roskam went on with his work, a clerk in the little local town hall.

"It's a good thing Lucy wouldn't have me," was all he said, for, seven years before, he had taken his courage in both his hands and proposed to a pretty pink and white creature, whose golden fringe had

blinded him, and had found himself laughingly rejected for his pains.

When informed of the financial crash, "It's all Sam's fault," had said Klaas, without further elucidation. "He'll never be able now to support a wife."

This seemed to be Sam's own opinion; at least, he had never made another effort to obtain one.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, with your bronchitis!" chided Rebecca, as she fussed about the tall, spare man, removing his gray shawl and his damp, shiny overcoat. "What on earth do you mean promenading about in the wet—"

"Ruining your clothes," added Klaas.

The cat, annoyed by the smell of moisture, rumped her nose and retreated behind the stove.

"I—I—never mind," answered Sam.

He sat down clumsily, hitched up his clogged trousers awkwardly, and stared round about him.

"The rum'll soon put you right," declared Klaas, knocking the ashes out of his Gouda pipe.

Sam started, sniffed, and recovering himself, stared harder than ever, at the other side of the round table.

"I—I think I should like some tea," he said faintly.

Rebecca dropped something, whatever she held in her hand—nothing breakable.

"Tea!" she cried. "You! Tea, of all things! Why, for twenty years you haven't touched tea after dark!"

"Wouldn't sleep a wink, if you did," laughed old Klaas, sardonically. "Tea! A deleterious infusion of—what's the Latin name? Comparatively innocuous in the morning, if made with ventilated—what d'y'e call it—water! Pah!" He was suddenly enjoying himself hugely. "Don't give him any tea, Rebecca!"

"There's none left," said the spinster, in mingled tones of regret and relief.

"Some new fad?" continued Brunting.

"Come, Sam, it's quite a time since we've had the last one. Which was the last one? Shredded something for breakfast—or Farm Homes for City Orphans? I forget!"

It was true that Sam Roskam, in the hum-drum trudge of his office-life, allowed himself the relaxation of what Brunting called "enthuses." His own health and the

welfare of his neighbors interested him in a manner especially provoking to Klaas, who cared for neither.

"Your body's all right, if you don't think of it," maintained Klaas, with the happy inversion of the healthy; and, "the less you do for a pauper, the sooner he'll tire of being one," with the cheerful sophistry of the self-made.

Samuel Roskam, conscious of no claim to the self-confidence he lacked, seldom contradicted his prosperous and truculent crony. Night after night they sat thus together, chance intimates, like so many life-friends, with nothing in common but the accident of not living elsewhere. Probably, like so many life-friends, again they would have discovered that they disliked each other, had they reasoned it out. Meanwhile, old Klaas Brunting sneered, and Sam Roskam never flared up in reply, except when some matter of principle, as he deemed it, made protest a duty. Then his gray cheek would flush, and his pale eyes grow paler, sure of Rebecca's encouragement, feeble but firm.

"By-the-by, how are the Farm-Homes progressing?" suggested Rebecca.

He plunged into the Farm-Homes: the last report was more than favorable. The town-bred children took most kindly to the cheeses—

"Eating 'em?" interposed Brunting, with a growl. The cheesemonger would hear nothing of street-Arabs and farm produce. "As well expect them to lay eggs because they're foul," he said. "I shan't buy their dirty messes. D'ye mean that you give your money for this sort of tomfoolery, Sam?"

"I send them my very modest subscription," answered Roskam, looking straight at Rebecca.

But immediately afterwards his glance again traveled nervously round the apartment, in and out of the corners. His manner was very peculiar to-night; she wondered what was wrong.

"The sort of man that potters about in the rain, instead of coming in," replied Klaas. He stretched out his hand for the tobacco-canister. "Get the punch, Rebecca! Do!"

Sam Roskam gave a jump, on his chair—on the edge he was occupying. They both saw it. They couldn't but see.

Klaas shouted with laughter. "Lord, man!" he cried, "why didn't you say you were in such a hurry before?"—again he shouted "Ha! Ha!"—"instead of jabbering about tea!"

"I—I—I—" said Sam, and halted.

Rebecca had risen and was fetching things from cupboards, with mutterings about "damps," and "bronchitis," and "tempting Providence," and "good stiff"—

"I should like to say—" began Sam.

He twitched up his eyebrows: he looked as if somebody were extracting all his teeth. The golden spirit gurgled down pleasantly into the tumbler from the long-necked black bottle. Rebecca stopped pouring, in amazement. The brother and sister both stared. The kettle sang on the stove.

"I would rather have no punch, thank you, Rebecca," said the miserable Sam. He breathed a great gasp, as if the last tooth were out.

But he was mistaken; it was the first.

Klaas Brunting, his pipe in his left hand, brought down his clenched right on the table, making tumblers and glasses to ring.

"Tea and no tea!" he cried. "Punch and no punch! I will and I won't, and I don't know what I want, or I do! There's no bearing with your cranks and your fancies, your whims and your oddities, Sam Roskam! Take the good drinks that Providence sends you, and go to the devil, and have done!"

"Just so. I don't want to go to the devil," answered Sam.

The other only snorted.

"Has the doctor said that spirits were bad for your cough, Sam?" asked Rebecca in the gentlest of tones.

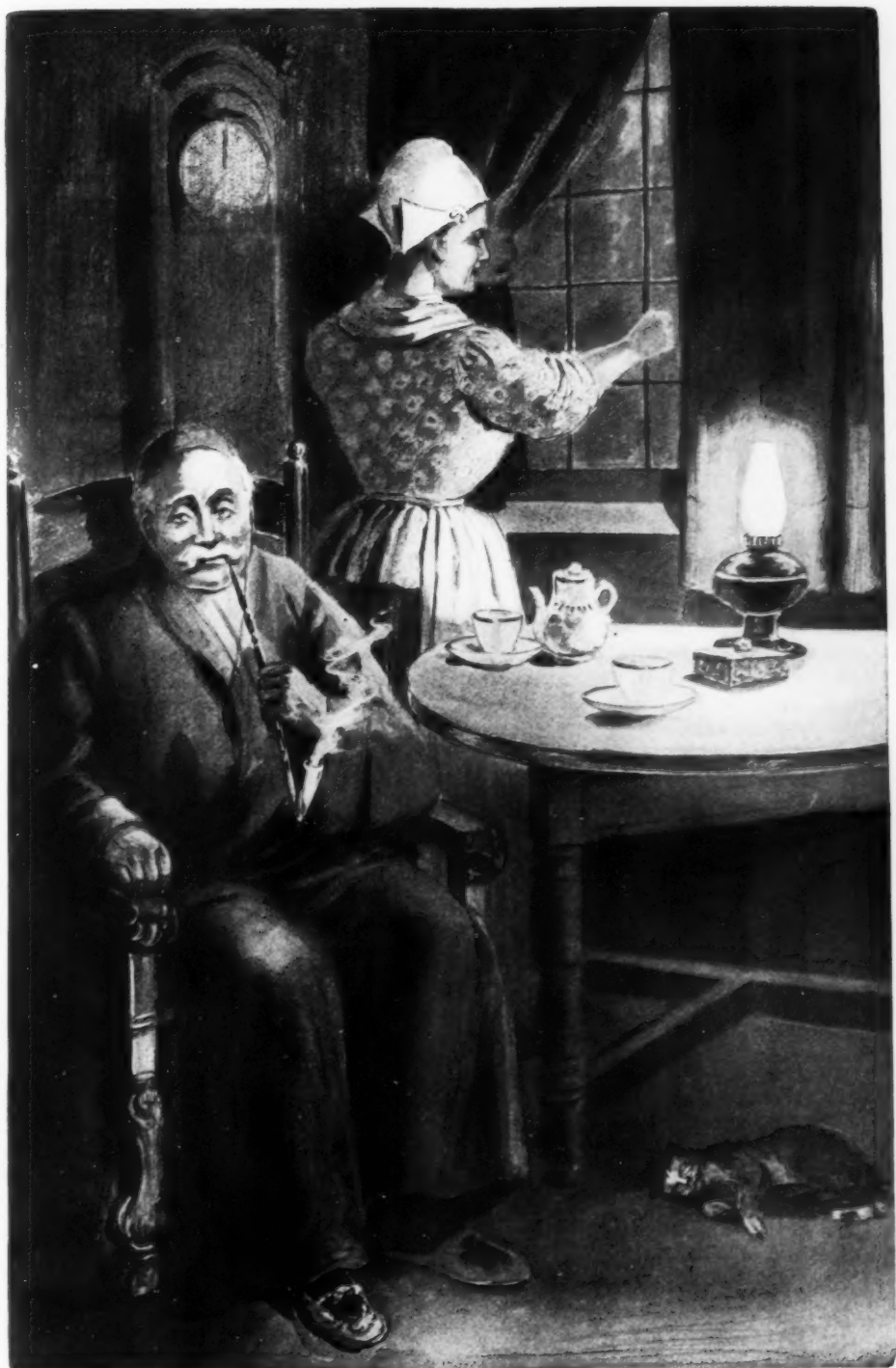
"No, he's found it in one of his rubbishy health-books," declared her brother. "One of the blessed pamphlets he goes to for a new diet every month of the year."

Now this was a gross exaggeration, but old Klaas hated all the books of the kind Sam had ever studied, for every one of them discouraged cheese.

"Diet be blowed," added Klaas, and fiercely bade his sister push across his glass.

She made a mild movement towards Sam; he waved the steaming tumbler aside.

"It's not a question of health," murmured Sam.



DRAWN BY ELLA DOLBEAR LEE

Rebecca drew the red curtains

"Then, what is it, pray? I suppose we must know," thundered old Brunting, "I suppose you're not quite out of your mind; your thoughts still have some sort of meaning? So I suppose we must know!" He shook himself together, like some irritable animal, in his big brown cloak. "I suppose you've discovered now you can only sleep upon tea!" he said.

Under the reiterated insult of all these suppositions Sam's self-respect wriggled right-side up.

"It's a matter of conscience," he spoke; "a—a matter of principle. I've come to the conclusion that it's wrong to take punch."

The silence was oppressive. The cat came from behind the stove and humped her back in front of it.

"Do you mean—" ventured Rebecca at length.

That fired old Klaas. With his pipe he thrust back his sister into silence.

"Let him speak!" he exclaimed. "Don't ask him what he means! He hasn't an idea. But let him speak. He don't mean anything, but it's pleasant to hear him. Well, Sam, so it's—what did you say, 'wrong' to drink punch?"

He set himself to listen, ostentatiously. His eyes twinkled; he was really getting a lot of enjoyment out of this, quite unconscious as yet of a deeper meaning in Sam's latest fad.

"I've been thinking about it a great deal these days," began Roskam, looking at nobody, but speaking gravely to Rebecca, "and reading, also. And I'm more and more convinced they're right. Yes, our great source of misery and wickedness is drink. The canker that eats out the heart of this nation is gin, Rebecca."

He turned suddenly to the spinster, who nodded.

Old Klaas had pushed back his black skull-cap and fixed his beady eyes on the speaker. Now he lay back in his chair.

"Temperance talk, by Heaven!" he said, in a low voice. All the lighter sneer had gone out of it. There was only scorn.

And, all at once, Sam looked full at him.

"Yes, temperance talk, thank Heaven."

"Thank what?" asked Klaas.

"I thank Heaven there are men in this country who dare to talk 'temperance' talk," said Sam.

"To drunkards, by all means," retorted Brunting. "Were you speaking to Rebecca or to me?"

"The duty of example—" reasoned the convert.

But Klaas would not allow him to proceed.

"Spare us!" he cried with both hands uplifted. Then he emptied, an unusual thing for him, his glass at one gulp. "Might I trouble you," he questioned politely, "to pass this tumbler to Rebecca? Or is that a sin which, since yesterday, you cannot commit?"

Sam thrust the glass across and began speaking eagerly:

"You can't understand," he said. "I mustn't expect you to understand. Only, don't you see?—once a man realizes—I've been having it borne in upon me for weeks; I wanted to speak before, only I was afraid you'd laugh at me."

"Oh, by no means," put in Klaas.

"I didn't want you to laugh at me, Rebecca. That's why I stopped outside to-night. But, don't you see—when a man once realizes how all the wickedness—"

"We've had that before," remarked Klaas.

"Of this whole nation," continued Sam, raising his voice, "is largely attributable to drink—to drink, Rebecca—you can't deny it."

"No, oh no," said the spinster hastily.

"When we realize that, why then—why then—"

"We don't drink. We drink nothing at all," said Klaas.

He wagged his big bullock-head emphatically. But he prodded the tobacco into his pipe with deep prods of an angry thumb.

"We loathe the very look of the liquor," said Sam.

He struck his hand against the black bottle with miscalculated energy; he tried to catch it before it fell. Rebecca, with an apprehensive glance at her brother, set the wicked thing away.

"So," began old Klaas, and the word showed there was a great deal coming, "you're going to give up drinking punch?" He sat well back in his armchair, and squared his knees.

"Yes," said Sam, uncomfortably.

"Where did you get drunk?"

"What d'ye mean, Klaas? Oh, Klaas!" cried Rebecca.

"You know well enough what I mean. You needn't keep it up before me and Rebecca. Of course you've been and got drunk somewhere, like as might happen to any man, though I should never have thought of you. Was it at that funeral, last Tuesday—the other clerk's? Well, better men than you have got drunk at a funeral, but they didn't whine about wickedness afterwards."

"I never took a drop too much in all my life," replied Sam.

His tone was too absolutely sincere to admit of further doubt.

"Then I'm floored. I'd thought of the only possible explanation, and, if it's not the right one, then I'm done."

Klaas Brunting jammed the pipe between his lips and drew three spiteful puffs. The cat edged away from him.

"It's the example, I tell you. Henceforth I intend, for my part, to set an example—"

"To whom? To Rebecca?" burst out the other.

"No—no—"

"To me?"

His voice rose to that shout like a shot. He waved Roskam down and the torrent of his pent-up eloquence rolled forth.

"I understand! You needn't explain any more. For goodness sake stop explaining. You're a pattern to other people that don't go in for your fancies and philanthropies, and always have been. You're virtuous, you are; and you know, better'n any one, what's good for your body, and their souls! It's well enough, as long as you keep to your own anatomy, and I've stood any amount for years, of what suits your inside and what don't! I don't mind, as I've told Rebecca over and over again, 'as long as I can have my meals regular, let him talk!'"

"I never interfered with your meals," objected Sam, "though you always overeat yourself, and you'll die of it some day!"

Rebecca clasped her hands in terror and joy at such daring.

"I should like to see you interfere with me in anything," screamed old Klaas. "You think you've got a fine chance now, but you're mistaken! You intend to come

here, night after night, and sit watching me drinking my rum, as I've done all my life," suddenly he dropped his voice, "respectably, decently drinking my rum," he said impressively, "and you sitting there as an example? No!"

"No-o-o,"—he repeated slowly sinking his gaze to the crimson blooms on his feet. The cat turned her back upon them all. In the dull silence Brunting lifted his heavy eyebrows.

"Fill his glass, and have done!" he commanded.

Rebecca mechanically half-rose, her eyes on Sam's face, and shrank down again.

"See here, Sam Roskam," old Klaas spoke with leisurely distinctness, "either you'll drink your share of toddy, like a man, or—or you'll not stop to see me drink mine."

Sam Roskam's face went white, but not whiter than Rebecca's.

"I can't," he said.

"We've sat here together, every night, for more than thirty years. I've stood all your fads, as I said before; they didn't hurt me. But you'll not sit there preaching at me, with your empty glass, on my wickedness night after night, I tell you. So you'll let Rebecca fill your glass, or else you'll go."

"I can't," said Sam.

The cat, facing them all again, sat licking her paw, with an assumption of indifference.

Sam drew a vast breath. "I've signed the pledge," he said.

"Signed the—"

Old Klaas stuck. His pipe dropped to the floor in a smash, and the cat flew away from it. He lay back in his chair, as if some one had knocked the wind out of him.

"A blamed teetotal fool!" he gasped.

"So you see, I can't help myself now. The matter's settled," said Sam, almost cheerfully.

Old Klaas picked up his pipe and carefully examined the broken bowl. Probably the wreck angered him more than he knew. Possibly the wreck decided the whole thing.

"Yes, the matter's settled," he echoed.

Then he pointed to the door with the broken stump and, looking full at Sam:

"Good-night!" he said.

Sam rose to his feet.

"You turn me out?" he breathed. "After all these years?"

Rebecca had risen also. She came round to her brother; he motioned her back, with the stump.

"You can come back whenever you choose!" he said. His fat face had grown purple, despite his soft tones; the apoplectic veins were standing out in it.

"Come back? How can I come back?" exclaimed Sam, at the door. The quiet gesture, remorseless, was irresistibly pushing him forth.

"You can break the pledge," said Klaas. The other passed out, dragging his coat after him. "The idiotic pledge," said Klaas to his back.

The brother and sister heard the front door bang.

"He'll never come back," said Rebecca.

"The more fool he," replied Klaas.

Rebecca stood on the farther side of the table. "He was right, and you were wrong," she said.

He started, not believing his ears.

"Are you mad?" he demanded. "You never said anything like that to me in your life."

"Nor never wanted to. Though," she gathered courage, "I may have thought it. I've always done as you wished, Klaas, but—but—"

"Do you mean to say," he cried, half-scared, "that he's to come here and reproach me with drunkenness, as if I was our cousin, Wim Loper? I—I!" He stood up and stamped with his foot, "I—I—Klaas Brunting—as if I was that drunkard, Wim Loper!"

"Nobody mentioned Wim Loper, Klaas. Besides, he's been steady now for nine months. He's reformed."

"Let him take the pledge. I'll be bound Sam was thinking of Loper all the time. Wim's our cousin, on our side, and I daresay he thinks drinking runs in the blood! If he'd stayed here an hour longer he'd have told me to sign the pledge. I saw it in his eyes all the time, watching my glass! I tell you I saw it," he cried furiously. "The canting humbug! Eat too much, do I? He'd have added: 'and drink too much,' had he dared!"

"Nobody could say that, Klaas, with your two glasses a night, and three on

birthdays. But so full-blooded a man as you'd be all the better without rum, all the same."

"Are you taking his part against me?" cried Klaas.

"No," she said shortly.

She walked to a cupboard in the wall from which she extracted her bonnet, and shawl. He watched her. She put them on.

"Where are you going at this time of night?" he demanded.

"To see after Sam," she answered.

"D'ye think to bring him back?" he cried. There was a glad leap of triumph in the cry.

"No," she said again. "He wouldn't come—not unless—"

"You stop where you are," he said disappointed.

"Why, Klaas, he's never been alone like this before. I'll just go and see what he's doing. I won't be long."

"You just stop where you are!"

She hesitated, steadying her trembling limbs against a chair.

"Want to run after him, do you—when he's never asked you all these years?"

She made as if she would have answered him rapidly but checked herself. The cat, defrauded, as never before, of a customary saucer, plucked, mewing, at her skirt. She did not notice it. Then, steadily, she turned to the door.

That action maddened him. The words were out before he had fathomed their portent. "If you go after him, you needn't come back!"

The next moment he was alone in the room with the cat rubbing against his legs for milk. Rebecca had heard and, having heard, she had gone.

In the ruin of his whole life, which had come thus suddenly, he realized so much at once, clearly, once for all. They were gone forever; he had made their return impossible. He could not let them come back without incurring their permanent contempt, and his own. It had been his unswerving maxim to approve himself. At whatever cost he must stick to that.

He sat burrowing into this one idea, until he was deep down in it, in the dark. He kicked aside the cat, henceforth his only companion, and went across the room



DRAWN BY ELLA DOLBEAR LEE

"Tea and no tea!" he cried

to fetch the long black bottle, exceeding his most festive allowance. Presently he deliberately stumbled to the door and locked it, and put on the chain. Not too soon, for almost immediately afterwards he heard a hand at the lock, with the spare latchkey Rebecca always carried in her pocket. He sat in his armchair listening to the fumbling. How long it lasted! At length there was a timid ring. Then a long wait. He sat breathing heavily. The cat crept to the door and mewed—so loud, she must have heard. "Hist!" he

said. He felt the presence outside the outer door. He waited for a second ring. It didn't come, and unable to bear the tension any longer, he blew out the lamp. Then he knew there was nothing more to be done but to stumble away from the living silence in front of him, red and giddy and resolute, to the darkness up-stairs.

From that night Klaas Brunting, who had always known himself to be a very good man, became, as he quite realized, in duty bound a bad one. He could not

act otherwise. "A man's word's a man's word," he said.

His neighbors, who had always disliked him for his truculence, but grudgingly admitted his chief virtue, success, were delighted to find honest cause for abuse. All told how he had turned his good sister out of doors, because she had tried to keep him from drinking. It thus became known that the former deacon was a man of intemperate habits, and people who had always deemed him as respectable as he was disagreeable eagerly pointed out to each other that he was not.

His sister, as the whole town was aware, had vainly asked him to take her back—more fool she. Then she had sent him her latchkey, and two days later, had stepped, gladly welcomed, into a vacant situation as matron of a local Home. The committee, though trembling at any risk of failure, hesitated for a moment over the stipulated nightly visits of Sam Roskam to the housekeeper's room. The male members said: "Oh, bother!" but the minister's wife said: "No."

"You must admit that it is—ahem—unusual!" said the minister's wife, who was not unusual in any way.

Rebecca, with some of her brother's obstinacy, declined to argue the point.

"If only you were near relations!" sighed the lady.

"We are relations," replied Rebecca, "but not near enough."

"Or—or engaged!"

Rebecca flushed. "We are not engaged," she said.

The minister's wife sighed again, with an air of reproach. As a fixed rule she disliked people's not being engaged when she wished them to be. And with a full sense of her responsibility she wrote to Sam Roskam, whom she didn't know, on the subject. Sam Roskam showed Rebecca the letter.

"She is right," said Rebecca quietly. "In a Home like that the matron's example is very important. It would be different, if we were engaged."

Sam Roskam lifted his mild eyes and looked at her: her eyes also were mild, as they looked at him. They sat in his poor little attic, with the fading light about them, their faded faces, their fading lives.

"Yes, she is right," said Sam, meditatively. "It would be better if we were engaged."

Her heart gave a flutter at his change of word.

"Why shouldn't we?" said Sam softly. "I mean," he added quickly, "pretend to be engaged, of course. I know it could only be pretense."

She sighed heavily. "Yes, it could only be pretense."

Yet, the thing was most exceeding sweet to her—sweet, and utterly new and long, long waited for, if hopeless withal. In his situation, as clerk at the town hall, he earned some thirty-five pounds, not enough to keep his own body and soul satisfactorily together, there was no chance of his ever earning more. Between them, in the nightly intercourse of the endless years, had lain the oppressive silence of a something left unsaid. And now suddenly, the thought had found utterance, a thought whose existence she had ever hoped, and feared, and doubted, throughout all her brother's taunts and her old-maid fancies. Over the autumn-heart of the spinster broke a gentle and clouded sunlight. The desire of her lover was hers, an eternal possession.

"It would make things much easier," said Sam.

She did not answer, for she could not speak.

They sat together in the quiet attic. Presently she pushed down the green shade of the oil-lamp.

It was late when she rose to go. She held out her hand.

"Good-by, Sam. I will tell them," she said.

Old Klaas smiled most evilly, when he heard the news. She wrote it to him, simply, lest he should hear it from strangers. He had hired a woman who looked after his wants, more or less, and spent twice as much as the "thrifless" Rebecca.

"Ask her, when'll the wedding be?" he said to this woman, tilting the long-necked black bottle again; nowadays he lost count. "When I'm dead, I suppose," he added with an oath. He would not write to his sister, whom he considered responsible somehow, for all the new misery

in his house and heart, but he sent her a verbal message, through the minister's wife, that she never need count on a penny from him.

"Alive or dead," he added.

The minister's wife was rather glad of this, as she was anxious to keep her most excellent matron.

"Tell him, I will come back without," said Rebecca.

Klaas Brunting, from his place in church, his place of honor, could see the blue ribbon on Sam Roskam's shabby coat, and, one morning, with rage in his heart, he espied the same symbol upon Rebecca's breast.

That same Sunday night, for the first time in his life, he sullenly drank himself dead drunk. He gave his housekeeper money next morning not to speak of it to any one. His supreme dread now became, lest the outside world should discover that its libels had come true. The woman encouraged a habit in which she saw an easy source of profit to herself. He would sit gloomily over his glass, with congested brows, muttering that Sam and Rebecca were "murderers," over and over again. Once the woman, as dull-witted as she was sharply curious, asked him what he meant. With one of his now habitual oaths he snarled to her to hold her tongue.

It was many months after that, however, that the woman, having waited breakfast for him thirteen minutes—for him whose whole life had been a clock-work—grumbled her way up-stairs to find that the hands had stopped for good. She took two-thirds of the loose change out of his pockets, then she went and told Rebecca, telling all the neighbors on the way.

Rebecca shed truly sorrowful tears, from natural affection, and also because the doctor said that her brother had drunk himself to death.

"He was always apoplectic," said Sam. "He would have died anyway." And, as Rebecca unreasonably went on crying, "We all do," he added.

The man who had been a deacon was buried respectfully as such. All the more did the contents of his will come as a horrible and shocking surprise. His cheese-monger's-shop and his other little property were all left to Rebecca and Sam con-

jointly, but there was a condition attached. The condition was that the pair of them should get drunk together within a week of the testator's death. That was all. If they failed to carry out this condition, the whole property passed, irremediably to Wim Loper, the reformed cousin, long since hopelessly relapsed.

"Oh, sir!" sobbed Rebecca to the lawyer, "Oh, sir!" weeping far more bitterly than during the funeral, "don't let anybody know of this! Don't let anybody know, I beseech you! Oh, how unhappy my poor brother must have been!"

Sam gazed at her, as she stood there, with her silver-streaked hair, in her decent mourning, her handkerchief raised to her pale face. A great bitterness came over him against the villain who, dead, was thus playing with their innocent lives.

"But he's unhappier now!" said Sam.

Even the notary, who believed in nothing but stamped paper, shuddered at the words, and perhaps still more at their tone. It was some time before Rebecca could speak at all. At last she steadied her features and, struggling hard to steady her voice as well, she turned to the man of law.

"Would you leave us alone for a few moments, if you please, sir?" she said. "Me and my—this gentleman, to talk it over?"

The notary was about to make some suggestion, when a clerk, thrusting a fussy head into the sanctum, called his master hastily away to the telephone. Rebecca and Sam stood opposite each other in the solemn, little, musty room.

"I won't say anything," said Sam.

"No, don't," answered Rebecca.

"The scoundrel!" said Sam.

Her eyes filled with reproof and with anger; so much of both that he shrank back.

"I mean the lawyer," he explained hastily. And then, unwilling to pretend to deceive her, even where she was nowise deceived: "Being in a lawyer's-room, seeing it's the first time," he added apologetically, "I suppose it makes me call names."

"It was very bad of him," she admitted quickly. "Oh, very cruel and bad. But," her lip trembled, "it doesn't matter so very much, really, Sam, does it? We—we won't leave off being engaged?"

She spoke wistfully; then, as his answer delayed, with sudden vehemence:

"Oh, I feel it's selfish: I've often thought of late I'm very selfish, Sam. So that I may earn my living pleasantly—for I love the work, though I do wish they'd give me an extra girl in the laundry for the summer months—so that I may earn my living, I tie you down to this lifelong farce." She broke down completely, miserably, at the word; then she fiercely emphasized it: "This endless, hopeless farce."

Presently, calm again, she plodded heroically on. "I keep you," she said in tremulous tones, "from the choice of a younger woman, Sam."

"Oh yes!" he exclaimed, "I'm such a gay young spark!"

She set herself to see no beauty in the sensitive face before her; she tried to look at him objectively—in vain. It seemed to her as if no woman's heart could encounter with indifference the gaze of those love-loving eyes.

"A man doesn't age like a woman. There's nobody as old as an old maid."

"It's I that am to blame," said Sam. "Not brains enough to support a wife!"

"How strange are the rules of these charitable institutions," she answered. "A matron may have a lover to come and see her, but she mayn't have a husband come to stay."

"We knew that. We knew we never could marry."

A flush spread over her thin old cheek. She would not have admitted to herself that another thought had ever occurred to her. And yet—

He saw the flush, faint as it was. Then he said, with a frightful fierceness that staggered her, "Let's get drunk and have done with it!"

"Oh, Sam—hush!"

"When's a man's stopped in his path by a lunatic, he—he must parley with the lunatic," Roskam continued furiously, "When a man's threatened by a murderer, he must protect himself first, right or wrong! Is this murderer to kill all that's left of our lives, to crush our last chance of happiness? Is this lunatic—"

She thrust out both arms—to ward off the attack.

His anger turned on her.

"Very well," he said calmly. "After all, you are right. It is far more natural, and desirable, and right, that yon drunken wretch, who is not really a relation at all, should spend the money in drinking himself to death. Yes, that is sensible, and religious, and just. I am glad you are religious, Rebecca."

She pointed to the little blue badge on his breast.

"Plenty of men have broken that," he said.

Unable to speak, she pointed to her own.

"And women, too," he answered her.

"Doing wrong to do wrong, while we should do wrong to do right."

She smiled through her rising tears. "You are a bad advocate," she said. "You would really have me drink myself drunk, Sam?"

"Great goodness! Don't you see that our last chance is at stake?" He rose to his whole ungainly height; he struck his feet on the floor. "This man Loper!" he said. "This man! This drunken scoundrel! Oh, Rebecca, it's such a snug little business!" he said.

"It is," she replied, and burst into a torrent of tears.

"The poultry—" he continued.

"Oh, don't!" she exclaimed, sobbing.

"The cheeses—"

"I can't bear it!" she cried, her face in her hands.

"Wim Loper will let the whole thing go to ruin in a few weeks! The poor chickens—"

She swung round on him. "Get thee behind me, Satan!" she said.

He sprang back, but, recovering himself: "And all because you can't understand that a madman must be treated as mad."

She sank her eyes to the ground, she stood still for some moments, trembling slightly. He could see her lips move. Then she lifted her glance and looked full at him:

"Sam," she said softly, "You would really have me do this thing!"

"No," he answered, and went near to her. He, who had never touched aught but her hand, put his arm round her neck and kissed her forehead.

The door-handle turned, and the notary came bustling in.

"Such a nuisance, the telephone!" he explained. "Always rings at the most awkward moment. I was just about to remark that the dead man's heirs—"

"Wim Loper is the dead man's heir, sir, not we," put in Sam Roskam.

The lawyer stopped and looked at them, from one to the other. He laughed—a most unseemly thing.

"You don't want," he said, "to—ahem!—get drunk?"

"We may go—may we not?" suggested Rebecca, with simple dignity. She drew her shawl around her.

"My good madam, you surely don't think that the law—law and order!—would compel a respectable female like you to—to—commit herself—" He paused.

"Compel? No," said Rebecca "But—"

"Quite so. I was just about to remark, when called away, that such a condition, being immoral, is, of course, null and void. Immoral conditions count as if they were not written. But, when I come to think of it, of course it is very natural you should not know that. Most people think the law is based on immoral conditions. They wrong the law!"

And he laughed again, quite cheerfully, at thought of the ups and downs of legality, and also at the thought of this highly respectable spinster, drunk.

"I congratulate you," he said, "on your escape. Blue ribbon, too! Ha! ha!"

"You mean that the money will be ours!" questioned Sam.

"Undoubtedly. It certainly is funny to think of the testator's feelings, had he known. When he came to me, I could have told him, of course, but I solemnly wrote this down—" He tapped the document. "It was quite a good joke; I could hardly keep from laughing. You owe me a—ahem—a very great deal, you two. But for my silence, he'd have taken his money elsewhere."

He was glad to have helped these two honest souls, and he intended to make them pay heavily for it.

"But I understand nothing," said Rebecca. "I cannot take my brother's money unless I fulfill the conditions of his will."

The notary could not get her beyond that. He was surprised to find what a stupid woman she was.

"I know it was very wicked and foolish," said Rebecca sadly, "but he says Wim Loper is to have the money, unless I do what he wants me to do, does he not?"

"Yes, but the law—"

Sam Roskam stopped the functionary. "We quite see the law would let us have the money, sir," he said. "But we also see that Klaas would not."

Rebecca, in her anguish, cast him a grateful glance, which rewarded him a thousandfold. He continued in a frenzy of sacrifice, tearing his new-born dream of happiness to shreds:

"And whose money was it, Klaas' or the law's?" He threw himself back in a beautiful attitude of innocent inquiry.

"My good people, what a foolish way of putting it!" The lawyer gazed from one to the other.

"Was the money the law's or was it Klaas'?" persisted Sam.

Rebecca nodded.

"The law's, if you choose to put it so," replied the notary boldly. "All property is a civil convention. The state sanction alone makes it a reality, as you see, by this legal restriction of testamentation. The law, of its own supreme authority, decides how much of the testator's wish it will put aside, how much it will retain."

But this was above both auditors' heads. Quite stupidly they replied, looking at each other, ignoring him:

"Klaas says that the money's to be Loper's. He says it quite plainly," added Rebecca. She sighed, and turned to go.

The lawyer struck his finger-tips on the writing-table, annoyed, and nowise in admiration, for a lawyer sees, not right or wrong, but law.

"You have a week to—excuse me—to come to your senses," he said.

Outside the door Rebecca gave Roskam her hand. "Let me go alone now, please," she said. "Come Saturday evening!"

And each of them went a different way, carrying in a heavy-laden heart sad and sweet thoughts of the other.

Rebecca took possession of her dead brother's house: she must keep it for the next heir, drunken Wim Loper, who lived thirty miles off, in the city, having made this little country town too hot for himself. The lawyer might wait, if he chose.

The chickens should not suffer meanwhile. The one thing she dreaded, was that strangers should hear of this scandal her brother had brought on himself and on her.

As a matter of fact, the whole town knew all about it, every detail and some more, that afternoon. And nine-tenths of the population praised her and Sam openly for their splendid behavior, and seven-eighths thought both of them fools.

Rebecca stayed indoors, and kept almost out of sight for the next day or two. A stream of inquirers and inquisitives poured into the little shop; the shop-boy drove a roaring trade—for Wim Loper. Rebecca wrote down every penny, plainly, and hunted up a lost farthing until she was green in the face. The shop-boy hungered for the coming of Wim Loper.

Rebecca, who had obtained brief leave from the Home, undoubtedly longed also for the end. She wanted to be back in her own work, now permanently her life-occupation. She wrote to the notary again, and urged him to take the necessary steps.

The minister's wife said that all things had been most wisely ordered. If Brunting had not had the idea of that wicked will, the asylum would have lost its admirable matron. "We miss you: we really miss you," she said.

The town talked incessantly. People who had seen Loper in the city, reported that the happy heir *in spe* was having a gorgeous time, not unmixed with acutest anxiety lest Rebecca—or Sam, at any rate, should repent of so foolish a decision before the time was out. It was a solution the notary had suggested, that Rebecca, if her scruples really proved invincible, should "repudiate" the inheritance, while Sam, getting drunk or not, as he chose, could thus succeed to the whole little property and marry her. Wim Loper, already an inebriate wreck, was torn to the ground by this horrible uncertainty.

"They'll give in at the last moment," he said. He resolved not to be sober one hour until after the fatal limit was passed.

The limit was Sunday. On Saturday, two days after the interview with the notary, Sam Roskam crept to the dead man's house, to his customary seat in the parlor, at the usual evening-hour. The

empty armchair stood against the wall. The cat sat before the stove licking her paw persistently. On the table stood the spinster's tea and a glass of milk for Sam.

"Puss!" said Sam, stooping to scratch the cat's head, "Puss!"

The cat neither welcomed those that had returned nor sought for those that were departed. She had rubbed herself against the legs of Rebecca's chair, if that be supposed to mean anything. She now licked sedately on. Her pink tongue was very warm and alive in the somber silence.

"Drink your milk, Sam," said Rebecca at last.

He sipped it, giving some, in a saucer, to the cat.

"To-morrow it's over," said Rebecca with a deep-drawn sigh. "I expect Wim Loper to-morrow."

She furbished her favorite little brass-kettle gently with her soft pocket-handkerchief. She had given it to her brother for the evening tea-drinking, many years ago. It was the thing she had regretted most, beside the cat, when he drove her forth. She had refound it, much battered by the housekeeper, and she had spent her evenings in the silent room, thinking, and trying to work out the dents, as she talked, for talk's sake, to the irresponsible cat.

Now she sat in the old place again, with Sam opposite her, as in the old days, for the last time. When banished from the beloved pots and pans of her lifelong solicitude, she had still known them to be in their accustomed surroundings, performing their various duties for Klaas.

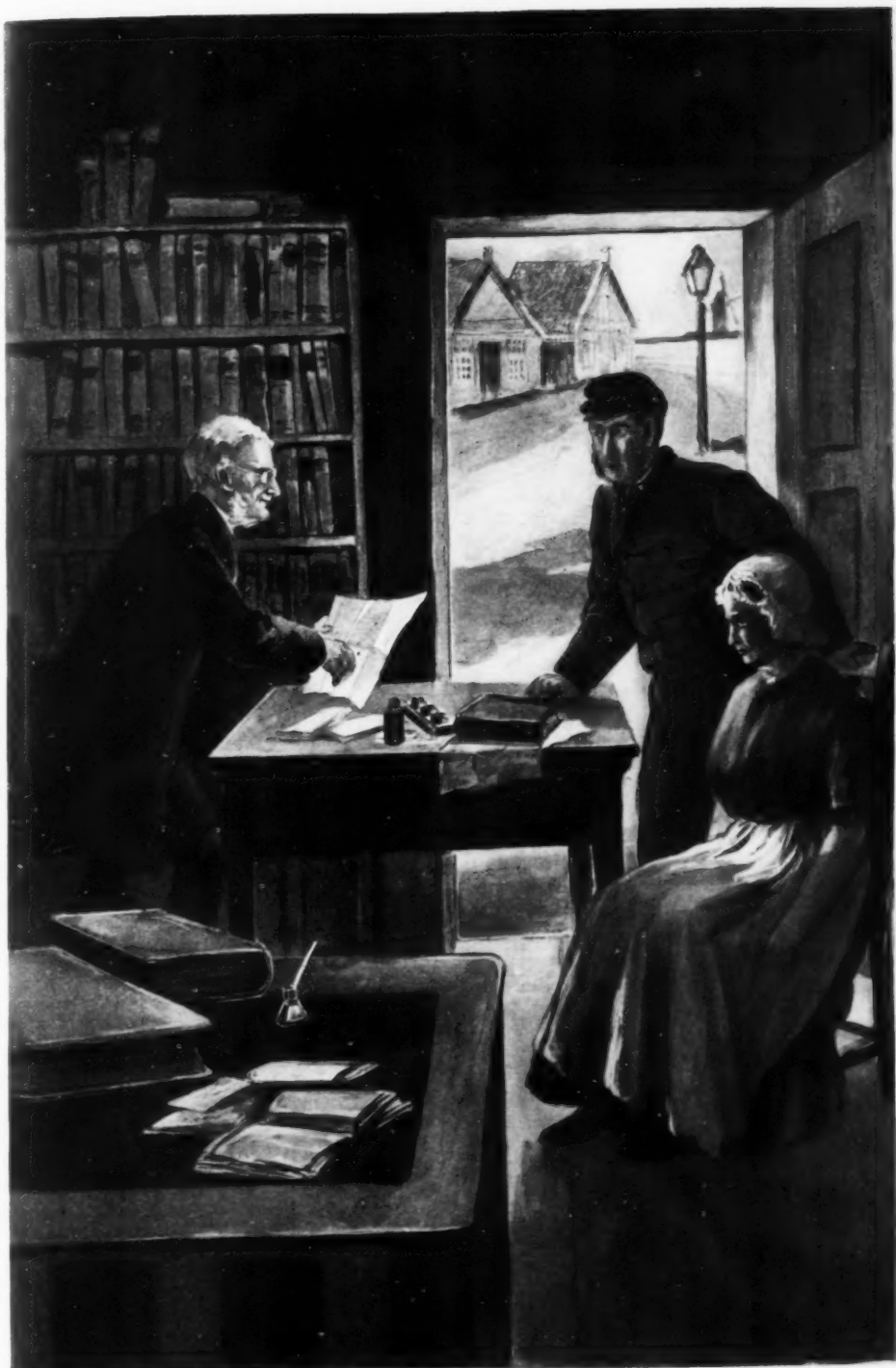
"Poor Klaas," she said.

"That brute Loper will sell everything," replied Sam.

He was a good man, but he was not equal to pitying Klaas.

Rebecca's mouth twitched. She closed her eyes, not to see the polished mahogany cupboard, the gilt vases on the mantelpiece. "Klaas has forseen all that. He wished it so," she murmured.

"Not he," answered Sam. "He was absolutely certain we'd get drunk—never doubted it. He couldn't have imagined any one letting money go like that. And he simply put in Loper's name because he thought that'd egg us on. The idea of Loper having your things! And besides,



DRAWN BY ELLA DOLBEAR LEE

"You have a week to—to come to your senses," he said

I daresay there was a touch of sympathy between him and Loper, towards the end, because—"

"Don't!" said Rebecca.

"He didn't know what a good woman you were, Rebecca. He never could have had an idea of that, had he tried!"

"Don't!" said Rebecca.

He sat gazing at her.

Presently he poured out fresh milk for the cat.

It was as they sat thus, with the weight of their grim destiny heavy upon them, that a loud clang of the shop-bell recalled them to to-day. Ten o'clock had struck; no customer could come at that hour.

Sam Roskam went to the door and came back with the notary. Rebecca put up a thin hand, when she saw the lawyer, to ward him off.

"Don't tempt me any more!" she cried. "Leave me! Leave me in peace! I—I have suffered enough."

But the notary answered: "Are you not a near relation of Loper's? Tell me, quick!"

"Not a near relation, but a relation certainly. I—I!"

"Wim Loper is dead!" cried the lawyer. His voice trembled, in spite of his contempt for the tremble in a voice. "The news is all over the town; the carrier brought it an hour ago. He lurched off his staircase this morning and broke his skull."

"But what difference does that make?" exclaimed Sam. "Rebecca's a relation, but she's not his heir!"

"You're a good lawyer, my friend," replied the notary, smiling. "Better than poor Miss Brunting here. Sit down calmly and I'll explain."

He himself took a chair, overturning the cat.

"Two months ago Wim Loper came to me and made a will. Who induced him to do that I cannot say. He said drink had been his curse, all his life, and he shed bitter tears over it, and finally he declared that in his death, at least, he would prove an example to others—he little guessed how truly—and he bade me leave whatever he possessed to those of his relations

who were teetotalers, excluding everyone else."

Rebecca did not speak, but Sam said: "There may be many. The number has increased greatly of years!"

The lawyer answered: "I should say, it is hardly likely. There will be any number who may now say they are teetotalers; but, remember, they must have signed the pledge before this day, Saturday, the eleventh. Mejuffrow Brunting, you probably know all these relations, more or less?"

"Yes, I think I know all, or know about them," replied Rebecca dully.

"Do you think any of them are possibly Blue-Ribbonites?"

Rebecca answered slowly: "I know they are not, for—I have looked up every one of their names in the lists."

The notary laughed loudly.

"You might have spared yourself the trouble!" he cried. "I never in all my life met with a Blue-Ribbonite, except parsons and young ladies, and, I beg your pardon, you!" He waved his hand at both. "That's why I put in 'Blue-Ribbonite—' purposely put it in 'Blue-Ribbonite,' and not total-abstainer, or any of that vague rubbish. Always be definite in law-business. And, when I heard of Loper's death, I couldn't sit still; I had to run across here and tell you. You are Wim Loper's heir, Mejuffrow Brunting, and no other; I heartily congratulate you!"

He grasped her hand, and also Sam Roskam's.

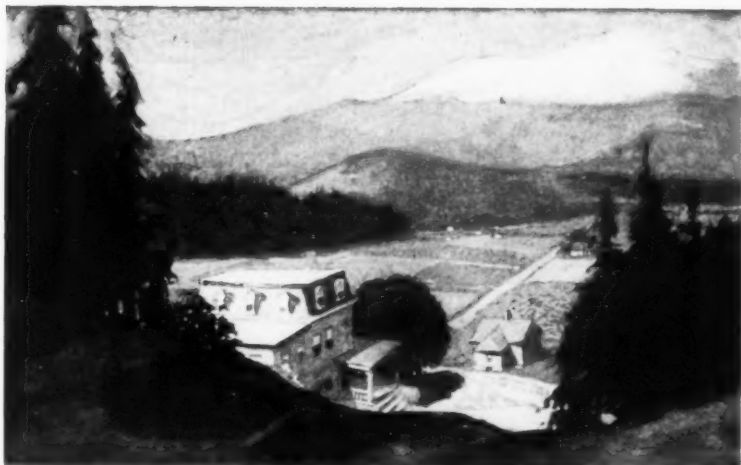
"There's a Providence for drunkards and for fools," he said. "Not much difficulty in seeing which is yours!"

Then he went away, laughing, and the shop-bell tinkled after him.

Sam Roskam took the hand which the lawyer had dropped. He gazed down, almost reproachfully, at the bit of blue in his button-hole.

"To think the Blue Ribbon should bring money!" he said. "It's a fine cause, all the same!"

"I suppose that farthing I couldn't account for doesn't matter now," replied Rebecca. "At least, not so much," she corrected herself after a pause.



DRAWN BY JOHN W. NORTON

Westward over a scattered medley of houses

The Way of Wrath

BY ALVAH MILTON KERR

Author of "For His People," etc.

OLD Stéphan Beret, *chef* to the house of Fuller since the days of the Riel rebellion, a red *fiasco* that sent him and many another tumbling hastily out of the Canadian Northwest in search of secret quiet, sat on the top step of the short stairway leading to the door of the rear piazza of the Fuller mansion, shelling peas. Pong Lee, laundryman and general lord of order in chamber, parlor, and dining-room, stood at a long table patiently ironing the Fuller linen. The exterior effect of Pong Lee was that of yellowing rice, clean as cubed sugar, cool, unobtrusive; the atmosphere of old Stéphan was also that of cleanliness, for he wore a white cap and white apron, but his abundant pink flesh and air of urbane interest in the world about him smacked of creamed coffee, roasts, salad oils, and the warm radiation of assimilating carbons. Upon the step near his slippered feet rested a pan of Bartlett pears. Two or three of these had been cut in twain and at the oozing juice bees sucked and crooned mumbling musically.

From his perch Stéphan looked down over a sloping orchard of fruit trees—

peach, apricot, nectarine, and pear—across a garden by a creek at the foot of the slope, and westward over a scattered medley of houses, set in the irrigable lap of the valley, to vast upward swinging waves of pine-tree tops, lifting and heaving with distance and breaking as in green foam against a white island in the sky, Mount Shasta's glistening top. Over the southern edge of the dazzling peak the sun was falling, an enormous blazing crystal, driving eastward across the slopes and down the valley a torrent of yellow light. It fell upon old Stéphan goldenly, beat through the vines and lattice of the porch, and spotted Pong Lee and the white linen as with the trembling souls of yellow flowers. Though but five o'clock of the summer afternoon, sunset had fallen; yet daylight, beating over the soaring rampart of the mountain, would linger in the valley for hours, delicious to the eye, tender and mystical of tone, softening and etherealizing the beauty of all things.

Stéphan turned his head and listened, a look of pleased expectancy on his face.

"I think it is not bees I hear, but Doctar

Frank's buggy wheels make spin," he said. "*Oui*; it is him! How that man makes the horses rone! He drives like devil most of the time. Val, he is not help that, he is not get round fast 'noff anyhow for all the folks. Evar'body think they got to have that boy fix them up, evar'body in fifty mile round. Some feller gets his head bust' fighting in saloon ovar at Clanahan, or noddar gets smashed undar a log in lumber-camps down on the McCloud, or mabbie blows up in the mines in Quartz Gulch, or has a sick child on ranch somewhere down the valley—*sacre!* they make that boy fly round! But he don't get tired; his cheeks red, he laugh, he like it, he make himself lot fun."

The old man stood up with the pan of peas in his arms, his eyes following a cloud of dust advancing swiftly up the road that followed the creek. In the cloud a span of black horses, dust-grayed and with noses outstretched, swept forward, and a man in a light buckboard and befloured as with pollen, swayed and pulled at the reins, speaking now and then an encouraging, urging sentence to the rushing horses. Old Stéphan's eyes glowed.

"He is one grand devil!" he breathed.

Pong Lee ironed away steadily. "Allee same good man, sure Mike," he said quietly.

"Him just good man?" cried the old French Canadian scornfully. "*Hein!* you have been here six weeks! Wait until you have been here six year, twelve year, more, like me, then you know he is a grand nobleman, splandid doctor! Evar'body lof him, he lof' evar'body, his heart is tendar like babee, but he is not 'fraid of anyting. He rides all night t'roo the dark mountains, he is not scared, he comes home on gray dawn his face all on smile, he is drink two, t'ree cop coffee, and slap me on my back and say, 'Stéphan, I fix up two, t'ree, five, six people that are sick or hurt, they are come on fine; I think, Stéphan, that we will make one big grin, eh?' *Ciel!* then we make a screech! Some time he is come in ver' still and sobar and not drink his coffee, just stir it with spoon, and look out the window a long time and mabbie say, 'Stéphan, I think I got to whip Phil Bull to-day, he is whip his wife last night;' then I know he is lost a patient, some one is decease. Then—"

The fat, grey *chef* stopped his loquacious tongue and looked and listened. The buckboard whirled up to the stables at the foot of the garden, and Doctor Frank jumped to the ground.

"Jim here?" he roared.

A youngish fellow stumbled out of the stables, rubbing his eyes.

"Yes, sir, yes," he mumbled.

"Hook the roans in here; be spry!" said the doctor. "Rub the blacks down carefully, put clean bedding under them, don't give them but little water or grain now, they are warm; feed and water them about eight. Better bring the grays in from pasture to-night, I may want them to-morrow." He turned toward the house. "Stéphan," he called, "throw some food in a basket and bring it down here to the buckboard; I can't wait for dinner."

"Yes, doctor, yes," assented the old man, waddling hurriedly into the kitchen, while Pong Lee went on ironing as one who heard nothing.

With the doctor's shout to Stéphan a young woman came out from the house through a side door and ran down through the trees toward the stables. She had black hair and big dark eyes and moved quickly and lithely, instinct with youth and gladness. When she came panting to the doctor's side he put his arm about her and kissed her, the face of each alight as from pleasure. As they talked, a woman, white-haired and leaning upon a cane, came slowly down the slope and paused in an open space, shielding her eyes from the light with a thin, trembling hand.

"Frankie, son, can't you wait for dinner? Can't you rest a while?" she called, her voice quavering with weakness and strong concern.

The doctor, a huge fellow with brown hair and dark blue eyes, turned his face toward her quickly.

"I wish I could, mother; indeed, I wish I could stay with you," he said, "but I must be over at Clanahan by seven. I amputated a man's arm there yesterday; I must see him as soon as I can. I'll be back by midnight, then I think surely I can rest until morning." His broad bass voice carried her in every word.

"Oh, yes," he went on suddenly, "I have a letter, I'll bring it to you."

He hurried through a gate and up to the open ground where she awaited him. As he handed the letter to her he looked down upon her white head and withered face with ineffable tenderness.

"You'll like it, mother, it's good," he said glowingly.

He watched her face as she tremblingly read the short epistle. When she had finished reading it she looked up to him with her lineaments all alive and her eyes suffused with happy tears.

"He is winning out," he says, "and the—weakness no longer touches him!" God is surely good, my son. But up there it must be difficult, rough and beset with temptations. Do you pray for him, my son? We ought always to remember him so."

The rugged giant before her was suddenly grave. "You know I am not a praying man, mother," he said; "I am even a wicked one, but I pray for him. I cannot keep it back; it goes up from my heart often when I am alone in the darkness among the mountains, and always, I think, when I sit by the bed of a sick child; the presence of a sick child somehow brings him strangely near."

She reached up her thin, shaking hands and drew his leonine head down to her and kissed him. "God bless you, my son!" she murmured.

The man put his great arms about her frail figure and laid his brown face against her cool cheek for a moment, then released her. When he came out by the stables again, the lithe, dark-eyed girl was helping Jim hitch the roans to the buckboard,

patting the horses and talking to them. A few moments later old Stéphan came puffing through the gate and pushed a basket under the seat of the vehicle.

"You will find a whole baked chicken in, ver' brown, and bottle hot coffee, doctar, and—" he began.

The doctor laughingly pushed him aside and sprang upon the seat. "Good-by, Louise,

good-by, Stéphan, good-by, Jim," he said.

He pulled on the reins and the roans shot along the road northward.

"About midnight, Louise, about midnight, I think," his voice came back through the dust, and then he was gone.

"He is one grand *davil*!" declared Stéphan.

"Shasta or Frank?" laughed the girl.

"Both, *madame*, both!" exclaimed the old *chef* with a profound obeisance.

They passed through the gate and up among the fruit trees. "You need not hurry in serving dinner,

Stéphan; about seven will do," said the young woman, following a path that led toward the front of the dwelling.

"*Oui*; I not disappoint," said the old man bowing. He followed her retreating figure with beaming eyes.

"She is a *petite* angal in that fluffy white dress! I not ver' much blame them boys to fight and try to kill each oddar 'bout her! Gar, I do like that myself some time long 'go!"

He waddled up the path slowly in musing mood and seated himself with a grunted sigh on the step again and resumed the shelling of peas.



DRAWN BY JOHN W. NORTON

The yellow light spotted Pong Lee

"The doc work bally hard, sure Mike," remarked Pong Lee in his thin treble, without looking up.

"Like a wild cat! Some time is he rich man if he lives," assented Stéphan. He mused a while. "You evar hear 'bout M'sieu' Charlie, the doctar's brother, what big trouble they have, what daval of time 'bout young *madame*, t'ree, four year ago?" he asked.

Pong Lee glanced toward him with face as expressionless as dough. "Yah, Sam Foy by big wash-house talkee me some, say doc tleat Chlally bally bad," he replied.

Old Stéphan emitted a snarl of irritation. "*Ventrebleu!* that pie-face monkey not know what he talk 'bout! The doctar shoot his brother, I know, but he is good to him, he is angal in the end. The doctar a bad man? Such kind of talk makes me ver' much disgust! I tell you 'bout that, the whole truth, you want hear that?"

"Sure Mike," said the Chinaman quietly.

The old man let his fat hands fall still in the pan for a moment and looked at the gleaming mountain, its reddening ambience touching his dark eyes with shifting lusters.

"Val, I been here long time," he said; "old M'sieu' Fullar hire me for *chef* when I come down from that bloody racket that we have up in northwest Canadaw. I have a hole in my left leg from a bullet, ver' sore, and I like it here and stay till I lof' all the folks and nevar care to live any oddar place. Old M'sieu' Fullar was a pioneer here; he is have graval mine down the creek and big ranch in the valley, and build a big house here long time ago. He was a great man. Old *madame* she was fine lady that time when I come here—stand up sstraight and boss like a queen—but after long time old M'sieu' Fullar die and young M'sieu' Charlie make trouble—*sacré!* but that boy make trouble! He is 'bout kill his moddar, he is put evarything on the bum.

"They always have hard time with that boy, old *madame* tell me. He is play tricks on folks, steal things, make lies, fight like a cat; still, most evarybody likes him because he is such a pretty chap. He is younger by five years than M'sieu' Frank;

he is got shape as fine as *petite fille*, his eyes are like amber, the big hazel, his hair is wave and is like chestnut in the color; old *madame* she is crazy with lof' of that boy.

"She not seem to think so much 'bout M'sieu' Frank. He is big, rugged, plain kind of boy. He is wild, too, some times, but he is lof' his moddar that hard he is not go much wrong. And M'sieu' Frank, how he is lof' that little daval brother of his! He is fight for him, he is whip oddar boys when Charlie make them mad, he is whip oddar boys some times when he is better whip Charlie, he is take the blame lots of times and get licked when Charlie has done wrong. That is the way it goes while they 'tend school here.

"Byme-by, M'sieu' Frank go away to school; he is going to be doctar some time. There is nobody much to look after that M'sieu' Charlie; he is laugh at old *madame*, he is fool round and have big fun, he is learn to gamble, he is make the money fly, he is get in scrapes with gairls. *Mon Dieu*, but that boy can raise Edouard with *la femme*. Old *madame* she's get him out of scrapes time after time; they is 'bout richest folks in the valley, and she is stand between him and the law some times. She's lof' him and want him to be lawyar, she's try to fill him with *aspiration*, but he is only laugh and have fun, he is seem to think they are rich and there is no use of him making himself trouble 'bout work. Old *madame* send him away to school after a time, but he not stay long, he has big fun, he raise Edouard, and they give him grand bounce. That is how things rone. Old *madame* she's get white hair fast them days.

"M'sieu' Charlie, he is get to be a man 'bout that time; he is make his twenty-one year, and he make demand for his share of the property that old M'sieu' Fullar left when he die. Old *madame* she's not like to do that; but she's have to put big mortgage on the ranch down the valley and give M'sieu' Charlie that money, then that boy he skips out. He is play stud-pokar and buck the faro game from 'Freesco to Portland, he is raise daval generale, he is have two, t'ree gun-fights and land in jail, but old *madame* she's hire big lawyar and get him clear. After a time evarybody knows that boy from 'Freesco to Portland; he is called Ivory Charlie; that for reason that

his hands and face are white like milk, and nobody can tell what he is think 'bout when he plays pokar, he make no expression in his face when he is play, just like marble image.

"All that time M'sieu' Charlie drink whisk', he is hit *dame jeune* hard, but it not show in his looks, he is white as lily and his eyes are clear like stars. Funny 'bout that, how some man drink little whisk' and look like lobster, noddar man drink whole lot and look like snow! M'sieu' Charlie not just like eider one or oddar of them kind, whisk' just make him look natural, make him cool and his mind clear. But some time he is drink champagne, whole lot, then he is get sick and crazy and want to kill somebody; that's when he is get in bad trouble.

"And old *madame* she's have bad time all them days; she's put mortgage on graval mine, but that mine is not much good longer, that been 'bout exhaust'. M'sieu' Frank he is come home e'ary summer and work like devil to make things go, and one time he is find new family have buy and move in house next door, over the hedge there. He is find, too, there is *petite-fille* in that house that make his heart jump. That is Ma'm'selle Louise Portar then. He is go over there and sit on the porch with her most evar' night, some times he is take her to ride on the mountain-side in the moonlight. He is a big, kind chap and she likes him, that is plain as the nose on his face, and that is mighty plain.

"Val, that happen in his vacation the year before he is graduate. Old *madame* she's ask him is he going to make marriage with Ma'm'selle Louise. He kiss his moddar and laugh but he not say. He is look mighty pleased. Things mighty bad with M'sieu' Charlie that year; he is bust up flat and have a big fuss down at Chico, he is get a knife in his back and come home and let old *madame* nurse him: When he is get around again he is meet up with Ma'm'selle Louise and go o'ar often and sit on the porch and talk with her. She is look pleased, but all the time kind of startled like she's 'fraid of him, he is so fascinate, so han'some, so differen' from oddar men. You understand all this that I been telling you?"

"Sure, Mike," blandly replied the Mon-

golian, sprinkling a table-cloth and spreading it over the ironing-board.

"Ver' good; I think I turn that roast in o'van, then I make finish," said old Beret, rising and shuffling into the kitchen. After a little time he came out and gruntingly resumed his perch on the step.

"Val," he resumed, "after a time M'sieu' Charlie light out again; he is gone up on Portland and deal faro-game on a salary, they say. Ma'm'selle Louise, I think, is glad that he is gone; she's 'fraid that boy is going to makè her lof' him spite of all she can do; he is fascinate as Satan. Old *madame* she's make herself sick for that he is gone away; I'm sor', too, for that boy is ver' agreeable when he feels like it.

"Next summer M'sieu' Frank make graduate and come home in June. He is big chap and evarybody likes him. Soon as he make his moddar embrace and kiss, he is go find Ma'm'selle Louise; he is look happy after that; he is roll up his sleeves and begin the fight on them mortgages, he is got to clear away them big dabts on the estate. All that time when he is been home in summer, t'ree, four year, he is not speak 'bout M'sieu' Charlie to any one except his moddar. He is look mighty bad sometimes, down in his heart he is both sor' and bitter, that is plain; he is sor' that boy throw himself away and make Fullar name onpleasant sound when men speak it; he is bitter that M'sieu' Charlie nigh break up the estate and make his moddar a wreck, but he is not talk 'bout that to anybody. One time I 'splode with angar, I say, 'M'sieu' Charlie heartless houn', and M'sieu' Frank look at me like mad grizzly and say, 'No more of that, Stéphan, or you can't stay here; that boy is my brother, don't let that slip your mind!' After that I keep my mouth button up.

"Val, M'sieu' Frank begin to be doctar right away; old Doctar Sherman, down the valley, he is play out, not fit to ride any more, so evarybody have M'sieu' Frank and like him; he is get big practas, in a few months. He is work like wild man fighting them mortgages; next year he is 'spact to marry Ma'm'selle Louise; things not look so bad quite. We not have any word from M'sieu' Charlie for a long time, most a year; old *madame* she's most distract;

then sudden he is come home. Then the grand trouble begin, the tempas' it break loose.

"M'sieu' Charlie is han'some as evar; if anything he is more white. He is have fine mustache that curl up at ends, he is part his chas'nut hair in centar and wave it back, his nose is straight and fine, he make stun' appearance. He is not big like Doctor Frank, but he is not 'fraid of anything; he is handle pistol like lightning. He is get fine enough clothes but he is get no money, so he bor' of Doctor Frank. That is pretty tough, since Doctor Frank is working his head crooked trying to pay the mortgages. At first he seem glad that M'sieu' Charlie is come back; he is lof' that boy, and think he is going to get him to look after the graval mine and ranch and be a man, but M'sieu' Charlie he not work more than a cat; he is fool round, play cards down at Sam Lany's place and ovar at Clanahan, but more than anything else he is hang round Ma'm'selle Louise. He is know that she's expect to marry Doctor Frank, but he don't pay no attention to that; he is always take any gairl that he is want away from his brother when they was boys; he is seem to think it is great fun. Doctor Frank not seem to care much at first, he is ver' busy, and he is believe in Ma'm'selle Louise like he believes in God. But after a time it boddar him, that is plain.

"Doctor Frank find out something sure 'bout M'sieu' Charlie that he is suspect for a long time; that boy he is use morphine. He is not hit the pipe, that way, he is take little bit evar' day. It not make him sleepy like some folks, it make him brilliant in his mind, it make him smooth as snake, it make him not care if a thing is right or is wrong. That is the way it goes when a man poison himself with them things. Whisk' takes the fine edge off his moral sanse, it makes him bad enough; but morp'ine makes him blind to all that is wrong; ae is steal and lie and evan take the human life and not seem to feel that it is sin.

"After that Doctor Frank he is grow uneasy, he is sor', he is angry, he is disgust. He is not want Ma'm'selle Louise to 'sociate with M'sieu' Charlie; he is 'fraid of him. Ma'm'selle Louise she's 'fraid of him, too, but she's not know ver'

much 'bout him, only that he is Doctor Frank's brother and is han'some and fascinate; she's not think it polite to turn him down, she not know what human devil that boy is. Doctor Frank he is talk to M'sieu' Charlie, he is tell him kindly not to see Ma'm'selle Louise freequent, that he is not want him to bring more trouble on them, that he is bring enough of that so far; but M'sieu' Charlie only laugh and go ovar and sit on the porch with Ma'm'selle Louise more frequent, he is make hi'self ver' charming to her. Then Doctor Frank he is talk to Ma'm'selle Louise; he is hint that she is too sweet on M'sieu' Charlie, that he not approve. He is too proud, too dignify to say things against his brother to her, he not like to tell her how low his brother is. Ma'm'selle Louise she is not know the real truth and she is resant what he say; she is proud, she is have speerit, and she make sharp respond. Doctor Frank in his heart is jealous, he is fly up hot and say it look like she is want that boy most too much, he is forbid her to entertain M'sieu' Charlie. Then that *fille* stand up straight, *qu'elle est grande!* She say she is still able to choose who she is talk to, she say at least his brother is a gentleman. Doctor Frank he is full up to his throat with heat; he say it look like she is in lof' with M'sieu' Charlie. Ma'm'selle Louise pat her little foot on the floor and look away and not say. Then Doctor Frank walk away, his breast black inside, his face white; he come straight home and go in his room and buckle belt round his waist with two pistols in, then he is go look for his brother.

"He is go down the hill and round in direction of Sam Lany's place, and he is meet M'sieu' Charlie coming along a path that rones up to the Portar house. Doctor Frank his blood it boil, he is call M'sieu' Charlie sneak-thief and ongrateful pup, he is tell him there is not room enough in the valley for them both, he is tell M'sieu' Charlie to get straight out of these parts and not come back, he is going to stay right hare and save the estate and win Ma'm'selle Louise back, if he can. M'sieu' Charlie just laugh at first, then he fly in passion and they have hot time. Doctor Frank take Charlie by the collar and swing



DRAWN BY JOHN W. NORTON

"He is not res' he climb hard"

him round and start him down the path, then M'sieu' Charlie whirl back like lightning and shoot. Doctar Frank he is drop like dead.

"M'sieu' Charlie look at his brother a minute; he is kill him, he is a murderer! His brain come full of scare, he is see himself hang, he is burn with flames of fear. Like a wild man he rone down the hill and slip in a man's barn and take a horse and fly.

"Doctar Frank he is lay there some time like he is dead, then he wakes up; M'sieu' Charlie's bullet is gone back of his ear and 'cross the base of his brain and make him stun', he is feel blood rone down his back. Then he is get up and he is gone mad, he is a wild tigar, he is daval. He is look all round for his brother, and he is see him 'bout a mile away going up a road out of the valley on a horse. Then Doctar Frank make himself home quick; he is not speak word to anybody, he is go in stable and take out the big bay colt and jump on its back and ride after M'sieu' Charlie like the wind. His blue eyes they is turn black, and have specks of fire in centar; he is say to himself that the end of some things come now; there will be no more dabts p'aced on the estate, there will be no more gamble, no more morphine, no more moddar made in torment, he is goin' finish all that. He is not feel that wound in back of his neck, he is think Ma'm'selle Louise is not going to be his wife, M'sieu' Charlie steal her lof like snake and try to kill him; his blood burns in his veins and hurts him like poison, he is navar look back, he is ride like hungry tigar.

"M'sieu' Charlie is wild with scare, he is see in his mind his brother dead on the ground back there, he is not know where he will go hardly. As he gallops on he is think mabbie he is strike railroad at Sisson or Montague and take a train to Portland, there he is go on a ship to China, or mabbie he is go up by Spokane and lose himself in woods in Canadaw; he is not know sure. He is ride hard along the road that follows Puma Ridge, and turn in on trail that leads round on the base of Shasta Mountain; he not know that Doctar Frank is ride after him like angel of death, he is see big pines all round him and land that tumbles like waves in a storm. Sudden he is hear sound

of horse's hoofs pound the ground back of him. He turn quick with feeling that icy wind strike him, and there is Doctar Frank coming with a gun in hand and face so changed he is hardly know him!

"M'sieu' Charlie feel his heart stop like it freeze, he is know now what fool he is been, he know now he is got to kill his brother or to be killed. He is cry to Doctar Frank like wild man to go back, that he is sor', but Doctar Frank nevar stop, he come on with face like steel, he fling up his arm, and his pistol flash and M'sieu' Charlie's hat fly off with hole in it and lock of his hair jump in the wind and blow away. Then M'sieu' Charlie's gun crack and something rone 'cross Doctar Frank's shouldar like hot iron, next moment Doctar Frank's gun speak sharp again, and M'sieu' Charlie's horse drop under him like ox knocked down. M'sieu' Charlie fall hard, but he is on his feet in instant, he is look for his gun but his horse fall on it and break it; he is pull it from under the horse and try to shoot, then he is fling it away, he is white and cool now like he is play pokar game, he look at Doctar Frank and grin. Doctar Frank is nevar speak word, he is urge his horse on, his eyes like point of rapier, his face like iron; he is swing his arm on straight line, but M'sieu' Charlie he steps behind a tree, and the next moment he is going up the slope toward the top of the mountain. Doctar Frank lift his gun and fire, M'sieu' Charlie wavar little then he is turn and kiss his hand to his brother and laugh, then he is gone out of sight among the trees.

"Doctar Frank he is not stop an instant, he feels blood rone down his shouldar and back, he is not a man any longer, he is a wolf, he is a savage; he flings himself off horse and hitch it to saplin' and start after M'sieu' Charlie like a lion that has a wound in its head. He is push hard up the mountain for some time, he is hear M'sieu' Charlie now and then, and some times he is get a glimpse of him ahead of him in the woods, but he can't come up to him. That boy is not so heavy as Doctar Frank, besides he make a climb to keep his life.

"After a long time Doctar Frank break out of the woods and come to fields of snow, snow that sweep up and up it seems

like forever, and there he is see M'sieu' Charlie on the white slope above him, half a mile away. That boy is make straight up towards the summit, he is think Doctor Frank will not follow him far, but Doctor Frank is follow him fierce like a man follow animal that is carry off his child. He is see blood drops on snow where M'sieu' Charlie walk and he is not rest, he climb hard and pant like houn'.

"That been about sundown, and the mountain flash like mighty gem, then after a time comes gold light on the snow and then blue shadows and then a big moon that makes the mountain silvare. They been high up on mountain-side, the wind it blow like ice and the stars blaze and shake close above their heads. *Sacre*, but they is have infernal time! 'Long in the night they begin to go mighty slow. Doctor Frank is feel his feet like heavy stones; still, he is pant and struggle on with his heart full of flames; he is follow M'sieu' Charlie's tracks in the snow, he is see his brother ahead of him many times like a black fly on a white sheet, but he is never get near enough to shoot. They both is freeze only that they exercise like mad. It go that way 'till mabbie midnight, then Doctor Frank begins to see M'sieu' Charlie ahead of him all the time; M'sieu' Charlie is begin to fail, he is ver' weak; still, Doctor Frank not come up to him, he is himself like a sick child, he can hardly stand on his feet. After a time M'sieu' Charlie falls down, but he is get up and stumble on, then he is fall again, and after a time he is crawl on his hands and his knees. Doctor Frank think then he is going to have him, but Doctor Frank is stagger like drunk man, he is step sideways and slip back and is fall down, he is rise up on his knees and shoot, but his hands shake like palsy and it do no good; he is got to come near if he is make a kill.

"Then after little time M'sieu' Charlie is crawl into a stream of warm water, it is melt a black path through the snow. Some time that mountain top been a volcano, and there is two, t'ree warm springs yet. He is crawl up that little stream, some time he is lap it with his tongue like a dog, his throat is burn with thirst like hot cindars. Doctor Frank he is get in the little stream and crawl after M'sieu' Charlie, he is come

nearer to his brother. Pretty soon M'sieu' Charlie come to the warm spring itself; there is a wall of stone beyond it and he can go no farther. He is get up on his feet and turn round and stagger, he is see Doctor Frank come crawling and he is terrify and cry out pitiful. Then Doctor Frank rise on his knees and take his gun in both hands and shoot, and M'sieu' Charlie falls back where he can't see him. Doctor Frank then crawl on up to the spring with his mouth open like a dog that pants with heat; he is come to M'sieu' Charlie and feel of him, he is find hole in M'sieu' Charlie's breast and the warm blood rone ovar his hands, then he is faint, he is sink down on his face, he is like a dead man.

"After a little time he is come to and sit up. There is a little flat place there six, eight feet wide, where the snow is melt off, it is like wet ashes and is warm and steam rise up and blow against the doctor's face. He look at his brother's face and it wavers in the stream and seems like when they is little chaps playing in the orchard below the house here, then his heart come tendar and suddan he take off his coat and tear his shirt in pieces and stuff in the bullet hole in M'sieu' Charlie's breast. He is find that M'sieu' Charlie's arm is pierced with bullet, and he tie it hard above the wound so it does not bleed. M'sieu' Charlie is not know an'thing, he is lay like he is asleep.

"Bye-by, after long time, the sky it get red in the east, the far mountain-tops they lift up shining out of the gray dark like whales break out of the sea, and Doctor Frank he is set there holding M'sieu' Charlie's hand, his finger on Charlie's pulse. He look down on the world like a man look out of the sky; he is pale as ghost, he is pray for light of day, he is call wild on the sun to rise, he have a great thing to do. Just when the sun's edge appear he cry out loud; M'sieu' Charlie's heart is seem to stop beat. Then Doctor Frank is work like lightning, he is take a little leather case from his pocket and out of that he is take a thin glass tube, he is take a little lance from the case and cut a slit in an artery in his left arm and push end of tube into it, he is then put the lance into an artery of M'sieu' Charlie's arm and push oddar end of tube in it, he is then

grip his hand round his left arm at the shoulder and strip it down hard and drive his blood into M'sieu' Charlie's veins. He is do that many times, he is hang over that boy and work and pray like a moddar ovar child that is die. He is feel of M'sieu' Charlie's heart, it is beat again, it is weak but it is beat. He is work a long time, then he is grow diz' and faint, and he take out tube and tie up wounds tight and hard, he is tear his coat all up to tie round the wounds. Then he is take M'sieu' Charlie on his back, like he is done many times when M'sieu' Charlie is a little boy, and he start down the mountain-side. He is naked to his waist, he is stain' red with blood from his wounds, but he is stop for nothing. How he is do that no man is know or believe, but he is carry M'sieu' Charlie miles down mountain troo' the snow and find that bay colt in the woods. It is take him all day, but near night he is bring M'sieu' Charlie home. He have him on the horse like he is lay down, he is hold him there and lead the horse evar' step of the way. M'sieu' Charlie not know ver' much, he is open his eyes some times and whisper, that is all.

"We all been worry night and day about them boys, we is not know where they are gone. Old *madame* she is worry and Ma'm'selle Louise she is scare', people they is begin to talk. Then when it been come most night Doctor Frank lead the horse up to our gate with M'sieu' Charlie on, and we hear old *madame* scream. Ma'm'selle Louise scream, too, and rone to them boys, and oddar folks come on rone. *Sacre*, but that is a tarrable sight! M'sieu' Charlie lay on horse like a rag and is white like he is dead; Doctor Frank is stain' with dust and blood. Old *madame* she fall down in swoon and Ma'm'selle Louise stare at Doctor Frank like insane.

"I is kill my

brother,' Doctor Frank say, 'I is kill him but bring him back to life for you; if you lof' him he is yours!'"

"Ma'm'selle Louise is then cry out pitiful, she is fling herself down at Doctor Frank's feet, and take hold of him round his knee, she is weep and say she is lof' only him, she is nevar lof' any oddar man. Then Doctor Frank is lift her up and look in her face t'ree, four seconds, then he put his hands on his face and break down and cry like a child.

"There is some folks round and they hear Doctor Frank say that he is kill his brother; there is constable present and he is think he is arrest Doctor Frank. When M'sieu' Charlie is been carried in house and is drink lot of coffee, he say 'Send that constable in here to me.' When the constable come in M'sieu' Charlie look at him cool and steady:

"Don't lay finger on my brother,' he say; 'I been take morphine and it make me crazy; I shoot at my brother and rone off up mountain and try to kill myself. He is follow me and save me. I shoot myself twice up on mountain but he is save me, don't lay finger on him!' That is how there come to be two stories in the valley about who is make trouble in that big scrape.

"Val, after a long time M'sieu' Charlie is heal up and go away, and Doctor Frank make marriage with Ma'm'selle Louise.

After a time Doctor Frank get letter from M'sieu' Charlie; that boy is up on the Yukon, and he send lot of money to help clear dabts off the estate. He say he is keep straight and have a gold mine up there, that since Doctor Frank shoot him and put some of his honest blood in him he is pretty decent man! That ver' funny to us all.

"Now, you have the true story of that grand mix-up, much the same as M'sieu'



DRAWN BY JOHN W. NORTON

"He is naked to his waist"

Charlie told me himself. I must make dinner ready in quick time or old *madame* been out hare and ask *pourquoi*, and mabbie give me the grand bounce."

The old *chef* arose and shuffled hurriedly into the kitchen, out from which presently floated odors sweet to the nostrils and a pleasant clatter of pans and kettles. The Mongolian for a time worked on stolidly

as if he had heard nothing, then his yellow fingers slipped forgetfully from the handle of the iron and he stepped to the doorway and looked at the mountain, now vague, golden, mystical in the failing light. In his eyes shone a glitter of mist, he shook his queued head sadly, wonderingly for a time, then stepped back to the iron, swearing softly in the tongue of far Cathay.

The Strategy

BY MABEL HERBERT URNER

Author of "The Letter Written and the Letter Sent," etc.

THE messenger-boy stood expectantly, his cap in his hand, following the design in the Persian rug with the toe of his stout, dusty shoe.

"No, I don't want to send any message." She was leaning back on the couch, playing with a tassel of her tea-gown, and watching with interest his shrewd little face. "But I want to make a business arrangement with you."

"Yes'm," noncommittally.

"Do you think you could spare me ten minutes a day—say at about ten cents a minute?"

"Guess I could."

But there was no undue eagerness in his voice or face. New York messenger-boys learn to be laconic and emotionless; it is part of the trade.

"Well, this is all I wish you to do. Simply call up my telephone number, 8237 Gramercy, twice a day. You will not have to say anything. Just call from wherever you happen to be. Do you understand? There is only one thing you will have to be particular about—the time. One call must be between four and six in the afternoon, and the other between eight and nine in the evening. Now do you think you understand?"

"Yes'm."

"Very well. Now here is the telephone number: I have written it down for you. And here is two dollars in advance. At the end of week, if you have done what I have told you, come here and I will give you five dollars more and a dollar extra to pay for the telephone-calls."

The next afternoon at about five there was a sharp ring of the telephone in the hall of Miss Norman's apartment. She excused herself to the man who was calling, and hurried to answer it.

"Hello!"

"Yes, this is Miss Norman."

"Oh, good-afternoon, I did not recognize your voice at first."

"Thursday evening? I am sorry, but I already have a dinner-and-theater engagement for Thursday."

"Friday? Yes, I shall be pleased to go Friday."

"Oh, I must thank you for the violets you sent yesterday; they were lovely. It was very thoughtful of you."

"Yes?" with a little laugh.

"Yes, Friday evening. Good-by."

There was just the suspicion of a frown on Richard Morton's face when Miss Norman came back into the library. But she did not appear to notice it, and the conversation was taken up where it was interrupted.

In the evening, two days later, Richard Morton dropped in with his usual complacency. It was about nine when the telephone-bell rang. Again Miss Norman forgot to close the library-door when she went into the hall to answer the call.

"Hello!"

"Yes?"

"Oh, good-evening!"

"Driving Monday at four? Will you wait a moment until I get my engagement-book? I am not sure about Monday."

"Hello! I have only a fitting for Mon-

day afternoon, and I shall be glad to postpone that for a drive."

"Yes, I shall be ready at three-thirty."

"Good-by."

The frown on the young man's face was unmistakable now. But Miss Norman chatted gayly on.

He left earlier than usual that evening. After he had gone, Miss Norman darkened the room and drew a low chair up before the open grate.

For almost an hour she sat there watching the flames and thinking over the lives of many women she had known: women who had given the best of their youth to some one man—a man who had monopolized their time and kept them from the attention of other men—and then, after four or five years, had gradually drifted away, leaving them too old and too hopeless to begin anew, with a future that held nothing but a dreary old-maidhood.

She thought with bitterness of the laws that imprison a man for stealing a silver spoon, but have no punishment for the man who steals the best years of a woman's life—her youth, her chances for becoming a happy wife and mother; who keeps her from all this, and then drifts out of her life, dooming her to lonely spinsterhood.

For three long years she had allowed Richard Morton to monopolize all her time. She was twenty-seven now. Could she afford to let it go on? Her happiness, her whole future lay in the balance. Why should she not fight for it?

Centuries of repression, of physical weakness, have left women with but one effectual weapon—trickery. And why should she not use it? Why must she sit quietly by and let her chance for happiness, for wifehood, and motherhood pass away?

He loved her—that she knew. But man-like he had lost some of the desire for possession when he felt that possession was always within his reach.

The next morning, when the messenger-boy came for his money, he received with it instructions to continue the telephone-calls for another week. That same morning Miss Norman wrote two notes, one to a leading florist, giving an order for a large box of violets to be left at her apartment every morning; the other to a fashionable confectioner, ordering a box of his best

chocolates to be delivered twice a week.

Every time Richard Morton called now, the telephone rang with invitations for drives, luncheon, dinner, or the theater, and there were always a great bunch of violets and a box of bonbons on the library-table.

One afternoon the maid told him that Miss Norman had gone for a drive, and he went away with a jealous anger growing in his heart.

And one evening Miss Norman came down in a long opera-wrap.

"Oh, Richard, I am so sorry! I didn't know you were coming, and I have a theater-engagement."

"I usually come Wednesday evening—"

"Do you? Oh, I believe you do; but I forgot all about it. You see, I am going out more this season, so perhaps you had better make positive engagements or you may not find me in."

"So it seems," bitterly. "I should like to call to-morrow evening, if you can spare the time."

She felt a thrill of triumph at the note of resentment and bitterness in his voice.

"To-morrow evening? Oh, I really am sorry, but I have an engagement to-morrow; but Saturday—I don't think I have anything for Saturday."

"Very well; I will call Saturday."

When he had gone she went sadly back into her dressing-room, took off her evening-gown, slipped into a loose *négligée*, and then threw herself down on the bed.

"Oh Richard! Richard!" she sobbed.

It was heroic treatment, but she felt that it was the only way.

Three weeks later a small messenger-boy might have been seen opening a very dainty package with a pair of very grimy hands. It was a box of bonbons, with a new ten-dollar bill on top.

"Gee!" And then a long, low whistle. That was all the expression he allowed his feelings.

There was no card—nothing to show where the package came from. Perhaps, if he had read the marriage-announcements in the social-column of that morning's paper, he might have guessed. But messenger-boys are not given to the study of the social-column; their interest does not extend beyond the sporting-page.

So he never knew.



DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

Smoking a cigar and gazing seaward

Marooned by Contract

BY WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

Author of "The Testing of Noyes," etc.

FOR a whole week Uncle John had been strictly himself. Not once in all that time had he picked a piece of imaginary lint from his coat, shredded a length of imaginary ticker-tape, or endeavored to call up the board-room on an imaginary telephone. Alarming symptoms, so pronounced at the time he and Dick were shanghaied in New York, had vanished into the clear, thin air of the tropical isle. The hour was ripe for a confession, and Dick could no longer delay making a clean breast of the whole affair.

Dressed in a torn linen shirt and soiled duck trousers, barefooted and bareheaded, Uncle John lounged at the foot of a palm that surmounted a sandy knoll, smoking a cigar of his favorite brand and gazing seaward. John Penniman, castaway, was truly a very different person from the fastidious John Penniman, of Perkins & Penniman, brokers.

Having finished with the tin dishes on which their midday meal had been served, Dick reached for the box of *perfectos*, left the hut, and started for the lookout station, lighting the weed as he went. He had a disagreeable task to perform, and he approached it with a firmness not unmixed with apprehension.

"Why the deuce can't we locate a sail?" demanded Uncle John fretfully, as Dick dropped down beside him. "It's ten days

now since that rascally Captain Mix abandoned us on this God-forsaken spot, and we haven't seen so much as a catamaran or a cannibal."

"There's no use worrying about a rescue, Uncle John," said Dick, by way of leading up to the confession. "You might just as well give yourself up to the repose and felicities of a quiet life and not waste any time looking for a sail. We shall be taken off this little island on the twenty-fifth of October, and not before."

"Had a dream or something, Dick?" was Uncle John's caustic response.

"No," Dick returned frankly, "it's in the contract."

"Contract! Contract!" A look of alarm flitted across the other's sun-burned, unshaven face.

"Merciful powers, Dick! It can't be possible that our hardships have—have—"

He came to a horror stricken pause, then patted his nephew on the shoulder.

"There, there, my boy," he added soothingly, "brace up and don't take this business so much to heart."

"I am perfectly sane, Uncle John," Dick laughed, a little nervously. "You see, I contracted for this experience with Mr. Reuben Tew, general-manager of the Desert Islands Syndicate—"

"'Pon my soul!" gasped Uncle John, staring hard at the young man.

"Don't, Dicky," he begged, floundering to his feet. "What you need is a wee nip and a *siesta*. Go back into the jungle and try the hammock for a while. I'd give a million dollars this minute," he finished, with a miserable look toward the heaving skyline, "if I could see a ship heading this way."

"Sit down, uncle," said Dick, restraining the anxious hands that were trying to lift him erect, "and don't be foolish. I entered into a conspiracy with Mr. Tew, and we are here as the result of it. On the twenty-fifth of October we shall be rescued, and not before."

Uncle John heaved a melancholy sigh, gave Dick a look of sad commiseration, and sank back into the sand.

"I don't want you to be put out with me," Dick proceeded, "for what I did was solely for your benefit."

"Yes?" murmured the other, shaking his head drearily.

"That's it, exactly. Work and worry were getting the upper hand of you. You hadn't taken a vacation in ten years; no one could persuade you that you needed one, or get you to break away from Wall Street. You got so you were picking ravelings from your roll-top desk; we had to speak to you a dozen times before you realized any one was talking; and on top of it all you developed an alarming condition of aphasia and couldn't write your own name."

"To think, Dicky," Uncle John whimpered, "that you should get so bad as this without my ever dreaming of it! My only sister's boy!"

"I contracted with Mr. Tew," Dick continued grimly, "for four months on this desert island. In forwarding the plan, I lured you to that sailors' resort in Front Street, where Mr. Tew's agents drugged us and carried us aboard the *Blooming Heather*; and Captain Mix, who was also in the conspiracy, marooned us. Dr. Thorpe, the specialist, advised it, and we had to get a permit from the police department before Mr. Tew would perform the abduction."

"You'd feel better, Dicky," said Uncle John, "if you could sleep a little. Just an hour," he pleaded.

He wouldn't believe, but Dick had a

way to convince him. Taking a folded paper from the breast of his shirt, the young man opened it out.

"Read that," said he, handing it over.

"It looks like a circular," observed Uncle John.

"So it is," returned Dick, "and describes a brand new field of human endeavor. I am sure it will interest you."

The other's eyes grew wide and startled as he read:

THE DESERT ISLANDS SYNDICATE
INCORPORATED.

Dealers in probations, freely taken or enforced, accidental (supposedly) or designed, primarily intended as an aid to fictionists but now with a widened scope planned to meet the requirements of Socialistic Colonies, Anarchistic Communities, Missionaries, Seekers after Utopia, Invalids, and all others who, from whatever cause, desire a lengthened sojourn in some isle where absolute retirement is a *sine qua non*.

We own and control five hundred (500) unchartered islands in various parts of the two great oceans and are prepared to supply applicants with tropical paradises, refuges in the temperate zone, or arctic retreats where seclusion is positively guaranteed.

Abductions successfully engineered upon receipt of police permission and advice from a competent medical practitioner.

Shipwrecking and marooning a speciality. Our shipwrecks are conducted with a realism and safety that have earned us much renown in this particular branch. Premeditation or connivance is entirely unsuspected in the case of our marooners. Names of prominent persons whom we have successfully cast away are on file in this office; those not now undergoing probation, and who have been returned to home ports, are referred to by permission.

We are also sole proprietors of Man-Friday features (entirely exclusive), Tracks in the Sand, intermittent visitations by Harmless Natives, and other original and copyrighted ideas warranted to dispel *ennui* and result in healthful diversion.

Perfect immunity from outside interference assured. No wireless-telegraph instruments tolerated, and no cable runs within a thousand miles of any of our islands.

At a specified time dramatic rescue will be planned.

Our terms, while reasonable, necessarily vary with the amount of elaboration required in each particular case. Correspondence with novelists, next of kin, and others whom we may serve, respectfully solicited, and will be held strictly confidential.

NOTE—Fugitives from justice, and dishonest people generally, are warned not to

attempt to avail themselves of the services of our Syndicate.

Respectable people of means desirous of obtaining rest and recreation through our instrumentality, will please call on, or address,

THE DESERT ISLANDS SYNDICATE, INCORPORATED, PROMOTERS OF THE QUIET LIFE, HARIKARI BUILDING, FIFTH AVENUE NEAR TWENTY-THIRD STREET

As Uncle John finished with the reading, the circular dropped from his hands and he fell back against the palm tree.

"That's the exact situation, Uncle John," Dick answered.

"I thought it queer," murmured the elder man, brushing a hand across his forehead, "that my trunk and suit-case were ready for me on the *Blooming Heather*. It was very thoughtful of Captain Mix to have my personal luggage conveyed to his ship several hours before he—er—shanghaied me."

"I attended to that, Uncle John," said Dick. "I have tried in every way to look



DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

Just within the jungle the pursuers came to a sudden halt

"And you—you—" he gasped, but his emotions choked him and he could not finish.

"Yes, sir, I did," answered Dick. "What are you going to do about it?"

"Young man," said Uncle John, rousing himself and peering at Dick with bewildered severity, "by your own confession it appears that you entered into a most remarkable contract with this syndicate: a contract to have the pair of us abducted, put through a trying ordeal of six weeks on the *Blooming Heather*, and finally marooned on this island in mid-Pacific, simply and solely that I might have an allopathic dose of the quiet life."

after your comfort and to be considerate of your feelings."

"Dr. Thorpe thought it was a good move, did he?"

"You were such an obstinate patient, sir—"

"Yes, yes," he broke in with a deprecatory gesture, "but wouldn't anything else have served except this?"

"Only one other course presented itself," returned Dick, in a faltering voice, "and that was regarded as more or less chimerical."

"What was it?"

"Matrimony," Dick blurted out, and immediately cringed, for his uncle's views on that point were too well-known.

Uncle John was forty-five, and a bachelor. For fifteen years he had been so busy piling up dollars that he had no time for the master-passion.

What he said to Dick it is unnecessary to set down in cold type, but it was sufficiently emphatic. He finished by declaring that, as soon as he was rescued, he should begin a damage suit against the syndicate, Dr. Thorpe, and the chief of police. He said nothing about including Dick in his comprehensive legal proceedings, but that was probably an oversight.

Uncle John was still spluttering when Dick glimpsed a spectacle down on the beach that lifted him to his feet in stupefied amazement. Two white parasols and a green umbrella floated into his perspective, eddying around the end of the knoll.

The young man's dazed manner and staring eyes drew his uncle's attention to the shore.

"Great Scott!" exploded Uncle John.

The parasols and the umbrella had suddenly tipped backward, revealing two startled feminine faces and the fierce countenance of a middle-aged gentleman with Dundreary whiskers.

The middle-aged gentleman was carefully dressed in black; he was stoop-shouldered, wore glasses, and bore other marks of literary bondage. As for the ladies, they looked as if they had just stepped upon the island from an afternoon-promenade in Fifth Avenue.

Consternation was mutual. The parasols and the umbrella grouped together and quivered excitedly.

Of a sudden, Uncle John bounded for the hut.

In his confusion, Dick made no attempt to halt his worthy relative or to ask him why he fled; all he could do was to lean against the tree, stare wildly, and bombard himself with incoherent mental questions.

Before he had fairly recovered his wits, Uncle John broke out of the hut, having added a pair of white canvas shoes and a silk hat to his apparel. Undoubtedly he had felt that respectability required something of him, but the effect was startling.

The parasols remained on the beach, but the umbrella advanced upon Dick's and Uncle John's position with evident

hostility. The tufted top of the palm cast a shadow some twenty feet away. Having gained this *umbra*, the middle-aged gentleman closed his green shade with an angry slap and stood regarding uncle and nephew with an ill-omened frown.

"This is my island," said he finally, "and you are trespassing."

"Your island?" echoed Uncle John.

"Certainly, sir. I hold it under a three months' contract. It was guaranteed uninhabited, so you may imagine the consternation of my daughter, my niece, and of myself upon discovering you this afternoon. We were shipwrecked on this coast, with a colored *jactum*, a portable house, and all our baggage, at 10:40 last night."

"Why, dear sir," said Dick, with a side-long glance at the young ladies who were watching intently, "my uncle and I were marooned on this island several days ago, and we—"

"You had no right to be marooned here!" broke in the middle-aged gentleman with a curt gesture. "I have rented this place as an asylum where I may meditate in solitude and finish my book on 'The Vital Importance of the Gregarious Instinct in Man.' Your presence here annoys me, so I hope you will move on to some other island and not make a scene about it."

This was decidedly cool, to say the least. Unfurling his green umbrella, the middle-aged gentleman descended the slope, joined the ladies, and parasols and umbrella vanished in the direction from whence they had come. Uncle John removed his silk hat and gazed into the crown with a preoccupied air.

"Richard," said he at last, "that literary person, it strikes me, was somewhat rude. Is it in your contract that we are to have the sole occupancy of this island?"

"It is," replied Dick.

"Have you that contract with you?"

"I left it in New York."

"That was hardly a business-like proceeding," said Uncle John sharply. "The syndicate has blundered, and when you settle with Mr. Reuben Tew you should demand a discount."

"Did you notice the ladies particularly?" Dick returned. "Really, they appear to be charming people."



DRAWN BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT

Clasping each other tightly and gazing

Uncle John gave Dick a keen glance, but offered no comment.

"We're going to stay here, of course," said the uncle, "because we can't get away. So these interlopers will have to make the best of it. Is there a razor in my trunk?"

Dick assured him that there was, and together they returned to the hut.

Next day the middle-aged gentleman came over personally from the other side of the island to ascertain whether Uncle John and Dick had stood upon the order of their going. He found the two smooth-shaven, decently brushed, and otherwise *en regle*, and Dick was pretty sure they made a good impression.

The gentleman's name was Tolly, Rutherford Tolly. If Dick had had the forethought to have brought a "Who's Who" with him, no doubt he would have been highly edified by looking the gentleman up in it. Either the improved appearance of uncle and nephew, or intercessions for clemency on the part of the ladies, aroused a charitable disposition in Mr. Tolly. He was pleased to let them remain on the island, but they must keep strictly to their side of it. The divine afflatus, while dealing theoretically with the Gregarious Instinct, could not realize it practically without damage to the theme.

How the ladies regarded this segregation did not, for the moment, appear. They

promenaded the beach in their smart clothes, while Dick and Uncle John stood afar off and yearned for companionship. But there was no one to break the shackles of convention by presenting them, and their ostracism was complete.

Loneliness has beaten down many a barrier; and as Dick grew more and more discontented, it dawned upon him that the quiet life is not what it should be unless you have a sympathetic soul to share it with you. Something of this sort, too, must have been borne in on Uncle John, for he always accompanied his nephew to the knoll, and tried to appear equally forlorn while the ladies loitered in their vicinity.

After a week of these supine maneuvers, Uncle John suggested that they put their fortunes to the touch, boldly trample on the limits set for them by Mr. Tolly, and descend upon the portable house. It would be an evening-call, such a call as two solicitous castaways might make upon companions in distress without exciting remark. If necessary, they could even ask Mr. Tolly how the book was progressing.

Dick, more cautious and fearing to lose all through a reckless throw of the die, frowned upon the suggestion. "Sooner or later," he declared, "the Gregarious Instinct will manifest itself and they themselves will smash the fetters of custom. We must wait."

Nor was Dick wrong in this surmise. One afternoon, after he and his uncle had taken up their posts at the lookout station, feminine cries were wafted to their ears from around the end of the sandy ridge.

"The ladies!" exclaimed Uncle John, instantly on the alert.

"Here's our chance!" cried Dick, excitedly. "To the rescue!"

They dashed down the slope, rounded the point, and came upon a pair of white parasols on the beach. Beyond the parasols were the ladies, clasping each other tightly and gazing spellbound at a grewsome object near them.

The grewsome object consisted of a skull, hung over an arrow which was thrust into the sand.

"Courage!" shouted Uncle John. "Have no fear, ladies—my nephew and I will protect you. What is wrong?"

"Cannibals!" fluttered one. "Oh, dear, what shall we do?"

"Oh, dear!" echoed the other, tearfully.

"We shall be slain and—scalped, I know we shall," continued the first. "I never wanted to come here, in the first place, but Clarissa—"

"Really, it has been a delightful experience up to this moment," averred Miss Clarissa, "but if savages are to come—" She finished with a little shiver of dread.

Uncle John introduced himself, and presented Dick; then together they examined the arrow and the skull.

"I believe," said Dick, sagaciously, "that this is a declaration of war among the Polynesians, but—"

Cries of dismay interrupted him.

"But," he added hastily, pointing to the sand, "the savages left immediately after they had beached their *proa* and planted this omen of trouble, so there is no danger to be apprehended for the present. Will you not," he finished, addressing Miss Clarissa particularly, "allow us to escort you back to your house?"

The offer was gratefully accepted, and for an hour thereafter the threat of war was forgotten and that isle in mid-Pacific became literally the paradise of the syndicate's circular.

Thus it fell out that an omen of strife among the Polynesians became a token of

amity between the castaways. Hovering dangers reconciled Rutherford Tolly to the situation. Nevertheless, he was highly indignant. The island had been warranted not only uninhabited but safe. If the syndicate had defaulted in any part of its agreement, he was disposed to hold it legally responsible.

A search by the castaways of their joint-belongings developed a most deplorable fact. Neither Uncle John nor Dick had been marooned with a firearm of any description; nor had Mr. Tolly and the ladies been shipwrecked to any better purpose. Hatchets and axes comprised the only weapons which the party possessed.

Uncle John and Dick were appointed a Committee of Safety. They decided that the Tolly camp should be moved into the vicinity of their own, and Mr. Tolly decreed that the colored *factotum* should provide meals for all.

The Committee of Safety, aided and abetted by the ladies, constructed a stockade. Uncle John was the engineer; and the fearsome result of a stock-broker's conception of a barricade elicited quiet smiles from Miss Clarissa and Miss Margaret, and a certain amount of *sub rosa* raillery.

Mornings were given up to labor, afternoons and evenings to promenades and social intercourse. Uncle John, proceeding into the jungle with a hatchet, achieved for himself and his nephew a pair of neatly trimmed clubs. Armed with these, and the hatchets, the Committee of Safety escorted the ladies in their daily rambles along the beach, guarded them during their delightfully informal picnics, and at night stood watch at the stockade wicket.

Several weeks passed, devoted by Mr. Tolly to his paper-theories concerning the Gregarious Instinct, and by Uncle John and Dick to a practical exemplification of the same. It is small wonder, perhaps, that the old, old story crept quietly but firmly into these companionships, so that gradually Uncle John and Miss Margaret, and Dick and Miss Clarissa, gave increasing attention to each other. Uncle John's anxiety about a sail went to the other extreme. Whereas he had worried because one did not appear, he worried now because one might show itself and wreck their little paradise with a rescue.

Lulled by a sense of fancied security, Uncle John grew careless. When they fared forth on their excursions he began by leaving the hatchet behind, and finally the club. Guided by his example Dick did likewise. Then, in accordance with the usual workings of Fate, the bolt fell from a clear sky.

That afternoon the Committee of Safety and the ladies had been abroad in quest of bread-fruit. While they were resting from their exertions, the *factotum* burst into view, running at top speed and gesticulating wildly.

"De cannibals!" he cried. "De cannibals has come an' run off wid Marse Tolly's book! Fo' de land sake! We's all done gwine tuh be killed, Ah know we is!"

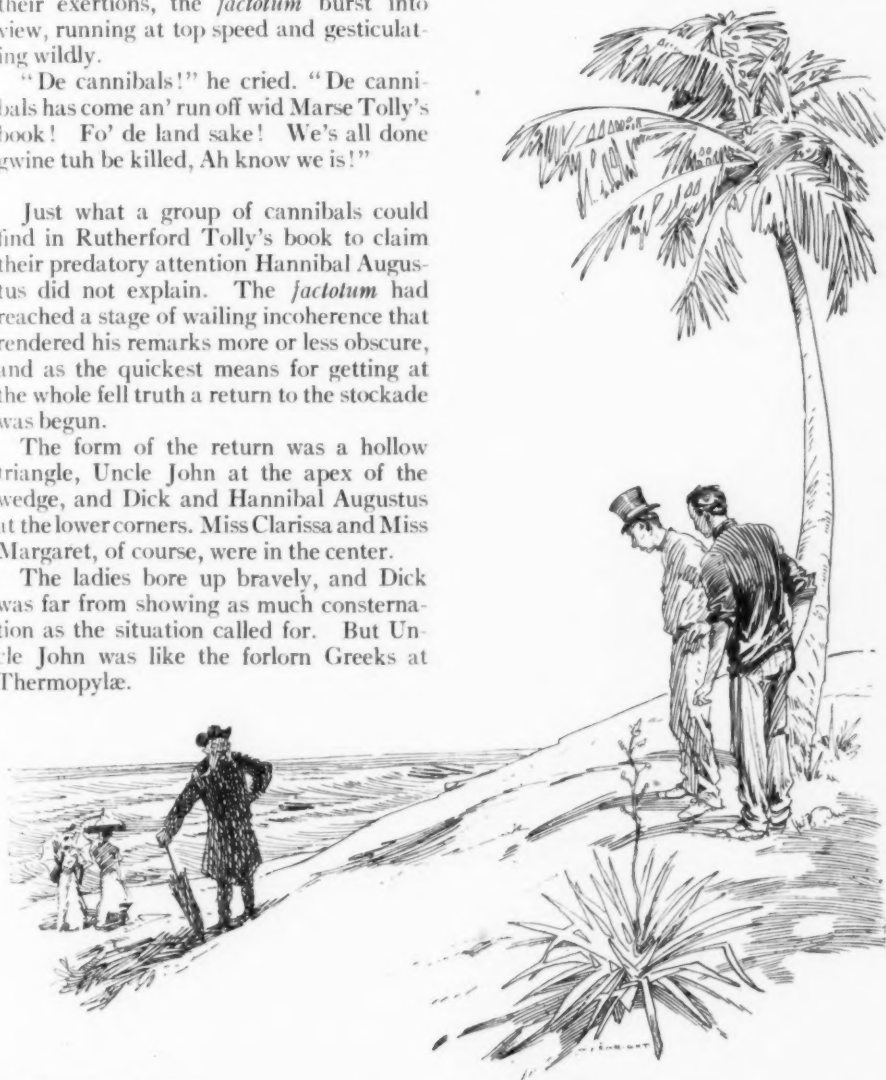
Just what a group of cannibals could find in Rutherford Tolly's book to claim their predatory attention Hannibal Augustus did not explain. The *factotum* had reached a stage of wailing incoherence that rendered his remarks more or less obscure, and as the quickest means for getting at the whole fell truth a return to the stockade was begun.

The form of the return was a hollow triangle, Uncle John at the apex of the wedge, and Dick and Hannibal Augustus at the lower corners. Miss Clarissa and Miss Margaret, of course, were in the center.

The ladies bore up bravely, and Dick was far from showing as much consternation as the situation called for. But Uncle John was like the forlorn Greeks at Thermopylæ.

He had armed himself with a stone, and led the van like a vigilant redskin. The determination to do or die was written large in his stern-set face. Arriving at the breastworks, they found Rutherford Tolly in a state of siege and semi-hysterics. So beside himself was the author that they had difficulty in persuading him to open the wicket and admit them into the inclosure.

A monumental work, the fruit of years



DRAWN BY WATER J. ENRIGHT

"I hope you will move onto some other island and not make a scene about it"

of study and painstaking care, had been finished shortly after noon. The ink was hardly dry on the word "Finis" when a particularly villainous savage, in an opera-hat and a naval-officer's coat, pounced into the boiler-plate house and out of it again, annexing the manuscript.

While Mr. Tolly was dwelling upon his misfortune, hideous cries were wafted to the castaways from beyond the stockade wall. Investigation through a port-hole showed that the savages had preempted the knoll. From the palm tree hung the priceless manuscript, and about this fetich the half-naked barbarians were dancing. They were armed with spears and raw-hide shields, accompanying their terpsichorean antics and hair-raising cries with dull and dismal thumpings. The spectacle was too much for Rutherford Tolly. Throwing himself into a collapsible chair, he buried his face in his hands and groaned direfully.

"Oh, Mr. Penniman, can't something be done?" murmured Miss Margaret, facing Uncle John with clasped hands.

That appeal was enough for John Penniman.

" 'The Vital Importance of the Gregarious Instinct,' shall be recovered," said he, proceeding to the corner where the clubs and hatchets were kept. "Arm yourself, Dick," he added, "and make ready for a sortie."

Miss Margaret, overwhelmed by the spirit her words had aroused, attempted to dissuade Uncle John from his rash purpose. On the opposite side of the room Miss Clarissa was arguing with Dick. Efforts and arguments alike proving futile to dissuade, conversation fell to *sotto voce* confidences; and when the Committee of Safety burst from the portable house and through the stockade gate, something had transpired that seemed to imbue both its members with the strength of ten.

"There are twelve of the savages, Dick," cried Uncle John, "but that confounded book must be recovered at any cost."

"If the worst comes," answered Dick, "we will sell our lives as dearly as possible."

"We're not going to sell our lives at all," came the fierce response. "I have everything to live for, man!"

They were hurrying toward the knoll, but Dick found time to give his uncle a searching glance.

"Have you—do you mean to tell me—" he began.

"I have, Dickv," replied Uncle John, an ecstatic smile wrestling with the martial expression on his sun-browned face.

"So have I!" declared Dick, joyfully.

My boy, my boy!" panted Uncle John.

At that moment the savages, glimpsing the attacking force, beat a hasty retreat into the jungle, the man in the opera-hat seizing the manuscript as he went.

"Cowards!" shouted Uncle John. "Keep right after them, Dick. Remember, we are being watched from the stockade! If ever you distinguished yourself, do it now."

Just within the jungle the pursuers came to a sudden and astounded halt. Kneeling before them in an abject attitude, and holding upward the Tolly contribution to anthropological science, was the native whom they were seeking.

"Well!" exclaimed Uncle John. "Of all the bluffs I ever heard of this is certainly the poorest excuse that—"

"Please, mister!" came imploringly from the humbled savage.

In one hand he held the book; in the other hand a letter. Uncle John took the first and Dick the other. The savage bowed his head to the earth and began scattering sand in his hair.

"What on earth does all this mean?" gasped Uncle John. "Who is that letter addressed to?"

"It is addressed to the Messrs. Penniman, marooned on Island No. 183," returned Dick, deliberately removing the inclosed sheet.

"Who is it from?"

"The Desert Islands Syndicate, per Reuben Tew."

Uncle John dropped his hatchet and club and leaned back against a tree, stroking his chin meditatively. An idea was taking shape in his mind.

"Read it," said he.

GENTLEMEN—

This will introduce to you Chappo Chizandi, of Tahiti, who has been engaged for your particular diversion. If he has succeeded, kindly place your O.K. across the

face of this letter. Trusting that Chappo has successfully relieved the tedium of your probation, I remain, *etc., etc.*

A silence followed Dick's reading during which he calmly O.K'd the letter, and the grinning Chappo arose and shook the sand from his hair.

"Do you mean to say," asked Uncle John huskily, "that this performance was in the contract?"

"Yes, uncle," answered Dick.

"And those tracks in the sand, the arrow, the skull—"

"All in the contract, uncle."

Chappo, receiving the letter back placed it tenderly in the breast of his naval coat. Then he turned, and pointed seaward. The eyes of the Committee of Safety followed the dusky index finger.

"A ship!" cried Uncle John.

"Right you are," said Dick briskly. "This is the twenty-fifth of October and our dramatic rescue has arrived according to schedule. Pick up the 'Gregarious Instinct' and let us return to the stockade and collect our traps."

The Methods of Marcia

BY HELEN TOMPKINS

Author of "The Web of the Spider," etc.

EVEN to the slow-witted clerk the situation possessed all the essential elements of a tragedy. A shadowy flush crept into his thin cheeks and he swallowed once or twice in an agony of embarrassment.

"The fact is—" he stammered. "You see Mrs. Chester, your husband left word—"

Marcia Chester, a neutral-tinted little woman with wide, shy eyes like those of a frightened rabbit looked up at him suddenly. The folds of silk in her hands—folds lustrous and soft like the inner lining of a hazel-nut slipped from her fingers.

"My husband—" she faltered oddly, then stopped short.

The clerk lowered his voice a little, as a group of women passed his counter whispering and giggling.

"It's not my fault, Mrs. Chester," he whined. "And if it wasn't your husband and I didn't know you would back him up I would say that it was a darned shame—"

The woman's thin, colorless face had taken on an ugly, dingy hue that did not add to its beauty, and a sullen look had crept into her eyes. When she spoke, however, it was quite calmly.

"What is it that John—that my husband has done?" she asked in a low voice.

The women were approaching them again, still laughing. A shiver crept through Marcia Chester's thin frame.

The clerk leaned forward and lowered his voice again.

"I was in the back room when your husband came in. I don't know what ailed him. He was furious about something and his language—"

She nodded. "I understand," she said quietly.

"It was something about a bill, I think. I heard Mr. Graham tell him that there was nothing exorbitant in the items; that a baby always meant a lot of expense and that being the first—"

A spasm crossed the woman's face. Only a few steps away the group of women had paused at the ribbon-counter and one of them was recklessly measuring off lengths of pale ribbon as faintly tinted as the winter roses now showing their soft color in Marcia Chester's cheeks. "Oh ten or fifteen yards," Mrs. Chester heard her say airily. "And send in the bill, please—"

"So he told Mr. Graham that you were not to have anything out of the store after this, without you either had the money or a written order from him. I heard Graham cursing about it afterwards, and saying that for a little he would—"

He stopped confusedly. She was not looking at him but her hands had dropped away from the silken folds as if the burned-out embers in the cinder-tinted lengths had scorched her fingers.

"Thank you," she said, in a queer little voice that made him momentarily forget his embarrassment and wonder if she were

going to faint. "After all the color does not suit my—complexion. If I decide later to get it I will come in again."

She walked out of the store her head erect, her anguish-blinded eyes seeing nothing.

"Why, Marcia—you, dear! And I all but missed you! If I had not happened to think of a pattern that I had asked Graham to order for me—"

Marcia Chester tried with all her might to brace herself. How dared John shame her so before the man—whom she had rejected? How dared he hurt her so—the mother of his child? She tried to force back her tears so that the other woman might not suspect.

"I did not know that you were in town, Laura," she said, "and I only came in for a little shopping. Oh no, I bought nothing."

"I saw you at the silk counter," went on the other volubly. "I was busy and so did not get near enough—But it was the exact shade—Cotton it was, of course, and you wore it with a little toque and a knot of scarlet that just suited your prim little—And he said—but, of course, now that you are married—and Allen said to me only yesterday, 'Chester has all sorts of money, Laura; Marcia is a lucky woman—'"

"I must be going home now." Marcia had been numbed at first but the dull pain now creeping back into her heart fairly terrified her. "It is the first time that I have left the baby so long, you see—"

"And he is twelve months—you see I know because—you foolish child! No wonder your eyes—"

The shimmering heat crept up and seared the tired brain behind the aching eyes as Marcia Chester trudged home over the dusty road that seemed endless. People passed her now and then and some of them stared at her curiously; she, the wife of one of the richest men in Franklin county toiling like a beggar through the heat. The dust lay thick on her coarse shoes and cotton frock. Once, pressing aside into the footpath to allow the wife of one of the men whom her husband employed to pass her in a smart phaeton, she felt the harsh sting of cockleburrs and ragweed prick her face.

She lived only a mile from town. It was not fatigue alone that brought stinging tears to her weary eyes as she closed the gate behind her and went up the grass-grown walk to the tiny veranda.

Her husband met her at the door. For the first time in their two years of married life his eyes fell before her own.

"Are you tired?" he asked concernedly. "The baby has not waked and I have a fire in the kitchen-stove all ready for you."

She hung her faded straw hat on a nail behind the door.

"I am not tired," she said and passed by him to bend over the sleeping child.

He waited irresolutely. "Does your head ache?" he ventured.

"Not in the least." She raised her face and looked at him again with the cradle between them. "I want to talk to you, John," she said with a curious kind of gentleness. "No—not now. In half an hour. And I am not hungry. I am not going to cook any supper."

A sudden flare of anger burned his swarthy face.

"You have seen Graham—" he began. "I don't want to discuss—"

She still faced him steadily. "Nor do I care to—discuss anything," she said, still gently. "It—is not worth while, John."

"You can say what you have to say now," he said with the petulance of a spoiled child. "I am not going to wait for a foolish whim—"

"Just as you like," she said indifferently. "Was it the truth the clerk told me back yonder at Graham's? Is it true that you told them—"

"Yes, it is!" he said sullenly. "You have needed the lesson a long time, Marcia I—"

"We will not go into the necessity of it, I think," she said, still with that curious gentleness. "It is not the first time that we have disagreed about things, John, but it is the last time that we ever shall!"

The new aspect of the woman bewildered him a little and he fell back on the old threatening manner that had brought her to terms more than once.

"I do not know what you are talking about!" he blustered.

She stooped and brushed a bit of fading ragweed blossom from her skirt.

"I am going home to mother," she said. "I threatened to once before, you know, long ago, but I allowed you to overrule me. And before I go I am going to give you my reasons for leaving your roof. You are a rich man, John Chester, yet you begrudge every cent I spend even upon your child's clothing. I am sick and tired of it all." She stopped, then repeated her words a little dully. "I am sick and tired of it all, and I am going home to my mother—to-night."

The man looked at her, maybe a bit stupidly. He had been prepared for tears and reproaches. Truth to tell, when he had stood in the doorway and watched her, slender and faded and tired, he had half-regretted his talk with Graham, but now—

"If you go, you may go and welcome for all of me. But you will leave the child!" he said flaming out in sudden anger. "The law will back me up in that. You are leaving me without just cause—"

"I suppose you are right," she said judicially. She was fastening her straw hat on her head with a long pin. It had a square head of garish green glass and Chester stared at it as if fascinated. "But I am not asking any favors of the law now, John Chester, nor of you. The child is your's and you are better able to take care of it than I am."

His jaw dropped and his eyes goggled ludicrously as he watched her fingers. They were quite steady.

"Leave the child!" he sputtered.

"Yes. Why not? My father and mother are both old, and there has not been a baby in the house for twenty years. I am not going to impose on them in their old age by taking yours there."

He tried to make head or tail of this new aspect of the case, and failed signally. It occurred to his benumbed faculties that she was trying to frighten him and he began to bluster again.

"I will take care of the child myself to-night," he began noisily, "and to-morrow I will get Fanny Lou Martin."

His wife's brow cleared. "She is living with her brother and I dare say will be very glad to come," she said calmly. "It's a pity that you didn't marry her, John, instead of me. Maybe you will, yet; I won't throw anything in the way."

The child stirred a little restlessly in the cradle, but there was no relenting in the woman's face.

"Well, good-by," she said. "Don't give Earl any more of the soothing-syrup to-night, John, unless you want to have trouble. I gave him a double dose when I started to town. I guess likely you will have a time with him to-night; I generally do, you know, when he sleeps in the afternoons. You can tell Fanny Lou she needn't pay any attention to him when he holds his breath. It's just temper, and he takes it after your folks."

This cold-blooded way of stating the case goaded the puzzled Chester past endurance.

"What in the devil ails you, Marcia?" he asked piteously.

"Nothing." She turned to leave the house. "Well, I guess I'll be going," she said again. "It's three miles, you know, and warm walking. If I see Fanny Lou I'll send her over. She got thirty dollars at her last place. I think likely you will have to pay her more."

"I'll do as I please!" stormed Chester, irritated to something like madness. "I am able to pay her what I please, I guess. If it comes to that, I may marry her after the July term of court—when I get my divorce."

Her face brightened. "You might do that," she said cheerfully. "And, of course, Fanny Lou would take more interest in Earl then. Like as not I may marry again myself. I have often thought that Bruce Graham would have suited me better than you. And they say that he has never noticed another woman since—"

He winced. "Since we married, you know, John. And while, of course, he has never said anything—"

Chester frowned blackly. "Graham is a fool," he said bluntly, but she had turned away.

A moment later the gate-latch clicked behind her.

"Tell Fanny Lou just to pack up my things," she called back over her shoulder. "I think likely father will be wanting to send in after them to-morrow. And don't forget the blue plush chair when he comes. I wouldn't care, but it was a present, you know—from Bruce."

A slow flush crept from her throat to the roots of her pale brown hair.

Chester still stared after her stupidly, until the dust and the curve in the narrow, tree-fringed road hid her from view. She did not look back once.

It seemed to the bewildered husband as if the slender shoulders had straightened suddenly, as if a heavy, intolerable burden had been laid down. He remembered wretchedly that it was the beginning of Earl's second summer, and that the doctor had said that he would be fretful and ailing until frost. He remembered, too, the long nights, when in the room next his own, with the door carefully shut between them to deaden the sound, he had heard his wife's tireless feet go up and down—up and down—while she crooned sleepily to the crying baby in her arms. He remembered the tired face that had still tried patiently to smile at him across the breakfast-table. What had come over his wife? Had the care of the child, the confinement to the house, the resentment caused by his foolish action cost her her reason?

The child stirred again in its cradle and began to whimper. What was he to do with the baby? He had no female relatives, and he had never, in his wildest dreams, meant to precipitate an open breach with his wife. The thought of the divorce-court was an agony to him; the thought of Graham, worse! Yet, granting that she, his wife, could leave her home and baby so lightly, without one backward glance, what assurance had he that any other tie would be more binding?

The baby, in response to the awkward joggling of the cradle, fell again into a light, fitful slumber; but John dared not leave the room, dared not allow the motion to stop even for a moment. There was a meeting of the County Central Committee, an important meeting, that night in town and he was chairman. Already the sun was setting. What was he to do.

Far down the road over which he had watched his wife come from town he saw a cloud of dust rise slowly. An instant later it resolved itself into a road-wagon drawn by a sturdy white pony. A woman sat well forward on the single seat and slapped the pony encouragingly with the

lines. Chester stopped the cradle cautiously. The child stirred again but did not awaken, and he went down the walk and leaned over the sagging gate to wait for the woman.

She was dark as to complexion, rather gaudily dressed, and there was a flicker of rose that did not look quite natural in her rounded cheeks.

"Where is Marcia?" she called interrogatively.

Chester flushed. "She is—busy," he said awkwardly.

The words which he had thought would be so easy to say now seemed quite impossible. He started nervously as Earl cried out from his cradle in the shadowed room behind them.

The fat pony showed a decided indifference about going on, although Fanny Lou slapped him again idly with the lines.

"She mostly is busy, I guess," she commented shrewdly.

"The fact is—I think that I know a place for you, Fanny Lou, and Marcia was saying—"

The white pony was displaying erratic signs of a disposition to move on, at last, and she reined him up sharply. "I'd be glad to get a place, all right," she said frankly, "that is, if it paid. How many are there to do for?"

Chester's face grew redder. "Two besides the hired men—there are three of them—until the crop is laid by," he said. "And there is a baby—"

"Oh, there is a baby. Then he will just have to pay double, that is all there is to it. Where is his wife? Dead?"

"He—lest her."

Chester was uneasily conscious of Earl's cries that had now grown to shrieks.

"You are mighty mysterious about it, it seems to me," she remarked suspiciously. "I will come over and talk to Marcia about it to-morrow maybe. She has more sense in a minute than you have in a month, John. But I got thirty dollars at my last place, and there were only two in family and they were both grown. You can tell him for me that the baby will cost him at least twenty dollars more, and it's cheap at the price at that. And if he is a young man—as young, say, as you are—he will have to get somebody else to boot—some

old woman. It wouldn't be proper noways without it."

She laughed audaciously in his face as she drove away, and he turned a little sick and disgusted and tramped heavily back into the house. Was it true that he had ever thought, seriously thought, of marrying Fanny Lou Martin, with her blowsiness, her cheap finery, her brazen looks, her noisy good-nature? He groaned.

Sixty dollars—fifty, at least—two more mouths to feed, and an endless prospect of having to sit opposite Fanny Lou three times a day indefinitely, if she would come. If she wouldn't. He thought of his petty meannesses, of his grudging economies, and his heart sickened. Then he thought of Marcia, his wife—yet his wife no longer—free and unencumbered, leaning back in the blue plush chair, smiling a little faintly up into Bruce Graham's good-natured, adoring face. He thought of the slender throat and the little curl that would slip from her tight braids; of the thin hands that had grown too slender for the tiny hoop of gold that had held her to him, and he groaned again, savagely. The baby began to wail.

The sun dropped behind the fringe of trees along the dusty road and it began to grow dark. There was no fire in the stove and no wood with which to make one; that had been a part of his wife's work. There was no kerosene in the lamps, either, and he remembered, all at once, that he had meant to tell Graham that his prohibition was only meant to embrace dry goods, ribbons and laces, and fripperies—the thousand and one useless feminine things that so sorely vexed his money-loving soul. But Graham's openly expressed contempt had so stung him.

The baby wailed again, more loudly.

He stifled an exclamation that would have endangered his standing in the church, and leaving the screaming baby went outside. The night had fallen suddenly and it was very dark. He stumbled over a rake which he had carelessly left lying in the path and measured his length on the grass. By this time his standing in the church was no longer a factor in the case and his language was utterly unfit for publication.

The baby still wailed.

"Is that you, Chester?"

He scrambled to his feet in somewhat undignified haste and groped his way to the fence. A man was dimly outlined in the shadows outside the gate.

"I thought that I recognized your voice but I couldn't be sure," he said hurriedly. "You ought to be in town, Chester; ought to have been there an hour ago. Brady township has sent in a delegation and they have a grievance. Starkly says—"

The baby's shrieks drowned his words. "Whew! got good lungs hasn't he?" he commented irrelevantly. "I say, Chester, there's no danger of him going into tuberculosis, is there?"

Chester tried to laugh, feebly.

"It's a good thing, I think sometimes, that we can leave all that to the women," said the man comprehensively. "Gosh! I wouldn't take charge of one for one night for—Say, get in the buggy with me and go to town, Chester. If any body can get around Starkly you can. He says—"

Chester drew back a little. "I can't!" he said a little desperately.

"Can't!"

"I can't go. It's—impossible!"

The man tried vainly to digest this information for a moment, then found the task impossible and abandoned it.

"Wife sick?" he inquired.

Chester coughed evasively. "She can't take care of the kid," he said lamely. "I—ch—guess that you had better get on to town, Bowles, and hold things down the best you can."

Bowles stared. The delegation from Brady township uncertain; Starkly wobbly as the deuce, and the chairman of the County Central Committee—

His brain reeled. He cut his horse sharply with the whip, a thing he never would have done in his sober senses, and the wheels rattled away down the road while Chester went back into the house.

The baby still wailed.

The luckless Chester found some crooked sticks and laid them upon the hearth and soon had a fire burning. He lifted the child, still screaming, from the cradle. "Face red as a beet and pulse pounding like the devil," he said ruefully. "Poor little fellow! I'll bet his temperature is a hundred and ten right now."

He loosened the child's clothing and tried to feed it awkwardly enough. But the milk was sour—he had forgotten to put it in the ice-box—and the baby would have none of it. He thrust it from him fretfully, and most of the contents of the cup found its way to Chester's clothing. The cup itself was shattered to fragments on the hearth, and the occurrence did not add to Chester's ease. The baby still screamed like a fiend.

He tried walking up and down the floor with the child in his arms, with little success.

"I'll give him some more of the drops," he said at last desperately. "He can't live and scream this way. And Marcia either said give it or not to give it—I was not listening."

He laid the screaming child back into the cradle and examined the bottle as well as he could by the flicker of the firelight. "No directions, of course," he said disgustedly. "Just like a woman. I guess it's a teaspoonful, though. I know that most medicines are given that way. I might give a tablespoonful—"

He stared at the bottle doubtfully then shook his head. "Better not, I guess," he decided at last. "It might be too much. I'll try a teaspoonful first and then if that don't work—"

The baby swallowed the medicine willingly enough between shrieks. He was accustomed to taking all sorts of things from a spoon, and even the nasty, sticky stuff that the spoon now contained carried with it a touch of familiarity. But he never left off screaming.

It was early summer as yet and the nights were still cool. But John Chester, when he laid the shrieking child back in the cradle, mopped his moistened forehead with fingers that shook a little. He was as weary as if he had followed one of his own ploughs since daybreak.

The shrieks of the heir of the house of Chester sank after a little into heavy sobs, from sobs to a peevish whimper, then suddenly ceased; there was a tired sigh and then a silence, utter and absolute, fell heavily.

Chester at first felt a deep sense of relief. He replenished the fire and set the coffee-

pot upon the coals. He found the kerosene, and in spite of the laws made and provided for just such cases filled the lamp to overflowing and lighted it. The wasted oil he mopped up with his wife's violet centerpiece, which he afterwards hung upon the blue plush chair to dry.

What it was that first awakened his fears it would be hard to say. The night was very still and he was not accustomed to loneliness. Not a cricket chirped upon the lighted hearth, not a katydid called outside. Even the frogs in the near-by swamp, usually so enamoured of their own voices, had fallen silent.

He tried to read something deep and instructive, but a sudden fear seemed to have taken possession of him. Only suppose that Marcia were in earnest after all! What would it mean if he were never to see the trim little figure in his home again? What if it were possible for her to forget him as easily, to leave him as lightly as she had her baby?

In the corner, her little blue apron with its crisp ruffles still hung as she had left it. It fluttered a little welcoming gesture, as a breath of wind crept through the half-open door, and he turned away. Something that was half a sob in his aching throat died away in a strangled cough. The fire was smoking abominably; how the reek made his eyes smart.

He stooped suddenly and bent again above the cradle. The child was still quiet, so quiet he could not detect the faintest breath. There was a queer, bluish shadow, too, about the parted lips, a shadow that was almost like an ugly bruise. The pose, the whole attitude seemed strangely unfamiliar somehow. He bent more closely, but the breathing was either strangely quiet, or hushed altogether.

His heart almost stopped with a queer, sick throb of absolute terror. He shook the baby roughly, but the limp little body fell back in the same stiff lines. Half beside himself with horror, he slopped water in the little face, all to no purpose.

Then he went to the shelf where the bottle of drops had stood. It bore no directions, he had noted a little earlier that it did not, but lying beside it was the paper wrapper in which the bottle had been packed. He read the printed words dully.

Parents are hereby warned that this medicine should be used discreetly, as each dose contains a small quantity of morphine. Ten drops is the ordinary dose for a child of two years, and even that should not be repeated.

"Nonsense! I am surprised at you, John. The child is simply utterly exhausted from crying. It's a wonder he didn't burn to death while you left him alone in the house."

"But the medicine—" he began weakly.

"Is in the closet. You surely don't suppose I would leave poison like that unlabeled. And I told you, you know, not to give Earl any more. The stuff which you did give him was a little hoarhound syrup that I had been using for his cold last week."

She looked at the man before her pityingly.

"Stir the fire and let me make some coffee for you, John," she said gently. "You are shaking like a leaf."

When he had gone out of the room she drew the little head of the baby down upon her breast. "Poor child!" she murmured. "I knew that John needed the lesson, but he is duller than I thought. I wish I knew—I wonder if he really thought that any earthly consideration would tempt me to give up my baby!"

He came back and laid the wood upon

the hearth, then touched her shoulder caressingly.

"I—I couldn't get along without you, Marcia," he said slowly. "Let's forget the whole wretched business, little woman, will you?"

She nodded. "Put your coat on," she said, "you will have a chill if you don't. And it's hardly worth while going to bed." Her clear glance met his evenly. "I am going back to town in the morning, John," she said pointedly, "to—Graham's."

As a matter of fact he went with her. There was a touch of color in her thin cheeks as she bent again above the silk counter and slipped the shining, nut-brown folds between her fingers.

"Do you like it, Marcia?" asked her husband a little wistfully. "It's a little sober for my taste," a sudden burst of generosity made his face brighten, "but buy it if you want it."

"Thank you, I think I will," she said coolly. She turned a little haughtily to the apologetically perspiring clerk. "I will take this and ten yards from that piece behind you. Yes—the crimson. And you may send some of the blue. Oh, I don't know, ten or fifteen yards I guess. And send the bill to my husband."

Second Thursdays

BY FREDERIC TABER COOPER

THE pink and white porcelain clock on the parlor mantel had just ceased striking eight when Mildred Earl listlessly descended the stairs, passing slim, nervous fingers in automatic inspection over the soft, pale masses of her hair. Vexatious last details in pantry and kitchen had delayed her until almost the hour for guests to arrive; and the spasmodic haste of her toilet left her with a vague sense of incompleteness, a disquieting doubt whether hooks and pins and buttons had all found their proper adjustment. Now that the strain of preparation was relaxed, she found herself invaded by a profound lassitude and discouragement.

Not once since the day when she had

mustered courage to address and mail the reception-cards inscribed, "*Second and Fourth Thursdays in January and February*," had the project seemed so fraught with audacity. Not even on those two stormy Thursdays in January, when she had sat in lonely state beside her untouched tea-table, had the idea that she, the daughter of luckless, misjudged Wilson Earl, should dare to give a series of days at home, assumed an aspect of such glaring and fantastic folly.

But suddenly to-night, all the scandal and tragedy of two years ago, when the public hue and cry had hounded her father to his death, rolled its old burden back upon her, crushing out her buoyancy and

elation, reviving the old anguish and outraged pride. She had been brave in those days. She had voluntarily closed the chapter of her girlhood. She had renounced the friendships that she cherished and the man whom she loved. And now, after all these months, to sue for the charity of grudging social-recognition, to be grateful for the scant courtesy of a few visiting-cards sent by mail, to expose herself, to be pointedly ignored by every male and female snob on her old-time visiting-list, was an unworthy weakening, a tactless and humiliating blunder.

A fitful crimson flared in the girl's pale cheeks as she faced the shabby, weather-beaten door, that would soon be opening to admit her guests, if any of them deigned to come. But would they come? Would any single one of her old friends take the trouble to seek her out in her obscurity? That was the poignant question, the stinging doubt, which all day long she had been trying vainly to force into the background of her consciousness. But now, with her eyes upon the peeling varnish of the door, there swept over her a transient, illogical wish that they would all stay away: a wish born of a sudden, shame-faced reluctance to have them witness her change in fortune; to know that they were contrasting the quondam splendor of Riverside Drive with the cracks and stains of this ramshackle suburban-cottage, from which not all her dainty lamps and decorations and feminine makeshifts could quite expel the gloom.

Pushing aside the sheer silk hangings, she rested her hot forehead against the grateful chill of the glass, peering out through the frosty clearness of the night. Few sounds broke the wintry quiet, save a distant jingling of sleigh bells, the strident grind of carriage-wheels on the frozen crust, the hurried tread of approaching footsteps muffled by the trampled snow. She listened apathetically, assured in advance that both carriage and pedestrian would pass the house without stopping. Wasn't this the third of her reception-nights that she had stood here, at almost the self-same hour, staring out into the darkness, watching pedestrians and carriages pass the gate, unheeding? And after all, she asked herself, with frank scorn, was it reasonable, was it even intelligent,

to expect any of her old-time friends to brave a journey to a suburban town, in mid-winter, at the bidding of a girl with a stigma on her name.

It was not the mere half-hour in a railway-train that kept them away. She remembered, in the old days, that seemed doubly far away and doubly dear to-night, how her own particular set had more than once hailed with delight an opportunity to make up a jolly crowd for some out-of-town function, in Newark or the Oranges—and once even for Stamford, when they were stalled half the night, by a derailed freight, and played kindergarten games to keep themselves awake. No, it was not the distance nor the cold that kept her friends away: it was the unforgotten blot upon the name of Wilson Earl.

Still keeping her fruitless vigil in the hall, the girl forgot herself in a painful waking dream, living over again those haunting weeks that followed the first dazing blow, when the firm of Earl & Meserole awoke one day to find themselves expelled from the stock exchange for alleged illegal dealings. Of these dealings, Wilson Earl maintained that he knew nothing; that the guilt lay with his absconding partners, whose speculations left the firm insolvent. The wife and daughter, who witnessed his impotent agony of mind, who saw him wince and whiten each morning, under the steady, merciless hammering of the daily papers, who heard his tireless stride, pacing off the sleepless hours of night, knew that he told the truth. They knew, also, that without the brief respite of narcotics, his overwrought brain could not have kept its sanity. And knowing these things, they clung to the belief that the end, when it came, was a grim accident—an added irony of fate. But the world chose to think the worst of Wilson Earl. Even in his grave, it still accused him of having wrongfully taken other people's money and his own life. And in proud humility, Mildred and her mother let the world's verdict pass unchallenged, and quietly cloistered themselves in this somnolent Hudson River town.

The girl shivered slightly and drew back from the warped old door, through whose shrunken joints whistled icy gusts as a



DRAWN BY BERTRAM G. KNIGHT

"Don't rake up old grievances to-night, mother, dear"

sieve sifts water. She realized suddenly that the house was much too cold for comfort, although the antiquated hot-air furnace had been alternately coaxed and driven to its full capacity. Poor old house: She was basely ungrateful to feel ashamed of its shabbiness, for it had been literally a haven of refuge—their one bit of real estate that had not gone in the general wreckage, because, by good luck, it had stood in her mother's name. She recalled, as if it were yesterday, the flash of glad relief with which she had learned from her lawyer that this humble remnant of landed interests was still theirs.

It was one Sunday afternoon, the Sunday following her father's funeral, the Sunday the Jaffreys had deliberately and ostentatiously cut her on the street as she came out of church, that there had come over her a desperate, uncontrollable desire to escape from the people she knew—people who could be so unexpectedly, gratuitously cruel. Assuming command of their broken fortunes—her frail little mother was too dazed, too crushed, either to advise or protest—she had gathered together the scanty resources left them—her father's life insurance, paid under protest, the few thousands that were her own personal legacy from her grandfather—and quietly dropped out from the circle that once knew her, shunning old haunts and old acquaintances, schooling herself to show a cold formality even to the loyal few, like Kitty Carleton, Helen Watson, Gordon Dexter, who refused to be quite put out of her life.

Ah, those loyal few! How she loved them for their persistent affection, their steadfast determination not to let her quite estrange herself! How little they guessed how their loyalty undermined her pride, how much harder they made it for her to persist in her self-banishment. While the sting of public shame was fresh, she had felt that she could not accept the generosity of any girl's friendship, the charity of any man's love—not even the friendship of Kitty Carleton, or Helen Watson, not even the love of Gordon Dexter.

Dear, faithful Gordon, who in the face of systematic discouragement, came unfailingly once a month, to renew his earnest, hopeless offer of his hand, with his

heart in it. Hitherto, she had bravely and steadfastly held out against him. But suddenly there had come a great craving for love and sympathy; an irrational, compelling longing to find out whether she was making a needless renunciation; whether, in short, society had yet forgiven her for being the daughter of Wilson Earl, or whether it intended to ignore her existence.

"Mildred," called her mother from the dining-room, "are you down-stairs yet, dear? There is something wrong with these lamp-wicks, I don't understand them."

"Coming directly, mother."

How typical that was, she thought, not grudgingly, but in utter weariness, of her mother's chronic helplessness, to have to call upon her for so simple a matter as the raising or lowering of a lamp-wick. She knelt for a moment to re-adjust the rug in the parlor doorway, shifting it a few inches to conceal a threadbare spot in the carpet. As she rose again, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror over the open fireplace. She half-regretted having worn light colors. Her pale blue silk emphasized the weariness in her eyes.

For the first time she realized how much of her girlishness the past two years had taken from her. Was it really only two years since she left the old, gay, thoughtless life? Only two years since the cost of a new dress had meant less to her than the cost of a new handkerchief to-day, and a needle was an unfamiliar implement, that pricked her fingers if she so much as tried to mend a glove? In the old days, a new frock meant an eager raid on the department-stores, a lavish order of coveted goods, an absorbing hour with the dress-maker, and then the pride of the finished garment; but the final reckoning was an unimportant detail, inscrutably adjusted through the medium of her father's check-book. Poor, misused, generous father! He had always systematically spoiled her, and with spendthrift fondness would at any time have bought her two dresses, instead of one, to save her the trouble of choosing between them. What would he have said, she wondered, of to-night's attempt to make terms with his fair-weather friends? Did not her act, in a measure, savor of disloyalty to him?

"Mildred," the frail, querulous voice called once more, "the chimneys will be all blackened, if you don't hurry. You know how nervous I am about these lamps; I can't understand why you don't have electricity put into the house."

The lamps on the supper-table were, in fact, flaring up fitfully, diffusing a faint, acrid odor of incomplete combustion. Mechanically the girl lowered the wicks and readjusted the red silk shades.

"Don't rake up old grievances to-night, mother, dear," she said, with patient weariness. "You know we couldn't afford the cost of wiring. Turn around a moment, while I straighten the lace at your throat. I declare, mother, brown is vastly becoming to you. I am quite proud of myself for having persuaded you to wear something besides black. You look ten years younger."

But the faded, depressed little woman in brown refused to brighten under the girl's affectionate flattery. That was the way it had been with her since the day of her husband's death: a chronic, almost childish discontent; a petty, futile fault-finding; a morbid fondness for looking upon the dark side of life. The ceaseless, purposeless friction put an added strain upon the girl's spirits, an added tax on her vitality.

"Don't tell me that, Mildred. I shall never look younger than a mummy, and you know it. Mummies are always wrapt in brown, so the dress is at least appropriate. Perhaps it will wear well; you have told me that four times. It will probably outlast me. But I still think you paid too much for it. Don't fuss at that lace any more, child, you make me so nervous. Why don't you open the window and let out this horrid smell of kerosene?"

"The house is too cold already, mother."

"That is because you won't take my advice and have hot-water heat put in. Not steam-heat, Mildred, but hot-water. That is the only kind your poor father would have had, if he had lived. Don't tell me we can't afford that either. We could, if you didn't waste so much on brown silk dresses and suppers for guests who never come. I wish you were a better manager, Mildred. You let the butcher and the grocer rob you right and left."

The girl did not answer. It was worse

than useless to argue and wrangle with her mother, in whom opposition only awoke new grievances. Instead, she made one last hasty inspection of the supper-table.

It certainly did look attractive, with its bright garnishings, its appetizing sandwiches and salads, its *bonbon* trays with their dainty piles of green and white peppermints. As she looked, she felt repaid for all her trouble. But suddenly she gave a mirthless laugh. She had made preparations for forty people, and perhaps not one would come! Yet she had not dared to provide for less. She had done it all herself, save for the well-meant interference of her mother, and the scant help of a willing but incompetent Swedish maid. Her arms still ached from the stirring of cake, the whipping-up of mayonnaise, the buttering and slicing of endless loaves of bread. She had eaten nothing since noon; the mere thought of food gave her an inward shudder. Supper for forty—and how many could she count upon with any degree of certainty? Of all her old friends from the city, not a single one, unless perhaps Gordon Dexter, whose presence meant blended pain and pleasure. And some few new acquaintances and neighbors could hardly fail to come to-night, the third of her evenings, without deliberate discourtesy—people whom she had met, for the most part, through the little local church she attended; conservative, provincial folk, who would eye her innocuous claret punch with grave disapproval.

Mrs. Earl's thin, tired voice was again raised querulously: "It is so like you, Mildred, to overdo matters! Sandwiches enough for an army! Half of them will be thrown away. You didn't succeed very well with your mayonnaise. I advised you to let me make it."

"The army would have been sure to come, if I had not prepared for them," said the girl with enforced good humor, though her lips trembled. "And the sandwiches won't be wasted, mother, nor anything else. We'll have claret punch instead of coffee, and breakfast, lunch, and dine on chicken salad until it is gone, even if the mayonnaise is a failure. Hark, isn't that a step on the piazza? Yes, there goes the bell. Why doesn't Hedda answer it?"

Waiving ceremony, she opened the door herself, admitting Gordon Dexter—as she knew that she would, for his familiar footstep had announced him to her even in advance of the quick energy of his ring. Before removing hat or coat, the man seized her by both hands and drew her forward under the hall-lamp. As he stood there, looking down upon her from the vantage ground of his virile height, such a sure and comforting bulwark of courage and loyalty, and with the old, wistful question in his grave, kind eyes, Mildred's heart suddenly quailed traitorously.

But his spoken greeting was sufficiently commonplace.

"What have I stumbled in upon, a birthday or a dinner-party? Lights all blazing, table spread, and you in your latest, grandest frock! Mildred, it's a touch of old-times to see you in blue again. You ought to do it every night, you know."

The girl masked her gladness under mock severity.

"Do you mean to tell me, Gordon Dexter, that you didn't know to-night was one of my 'Thursdays At Home?' Whatever brought you out here at such an hour, if it weren't for that?"

The man's countenance expressed frank dismay.

"Honestly, Mildred, I had forgotten. Or rather, I must have got the dates twisted. I thought it was next week, the 14th, you know. I even had it noted on my office-diary, so that I'd remember to make an early start."

"You can't take off your overcoat till you let go of my hands," she suggested practically.

He released her, glancing dubiously into the parlor.

"I have been in White Plains all the afternoon, closing a title for old Rowlings, and he kept me to dinner. Afterwards I came across by trolley. I am not exactly presentable for a show of this kind. May I stay a while, until some more people turn up?"

"Don't be silly; of course you may stay."

Try as she might, Mildred could not quite keep the tell-tale gladness out of her voice. "Presentable?" she thought to herself, as he stood revealed in his simple, dark, well-fitting business-clothes—what a

paltry, inadequate word! Why, he just looked strong and brave and splendid, as he always looked, irrespective of conventional evening-dress.

"Mother, Mr. Dexter is here," she called through the half-drawn dining-room *portières*; she wished that her mother would not so pointedly absent herself every time Gordon Dexter called. It was hard enough to preach down her own heart, without the added mortification of transparent maneuvers to leave them alone together.

But, as usual, Mrs. Earl failed to respond, and the girl seated herself on the sofa nearest to the parlor-window, which commanded an unbroken view of the main highway, where it stretched southward toward New York, a broad streak of crystalline whiteness, gleaming in the moonlight. With a vague gesture, the man refused the seat by her side, and remained doggedly standing, while he flung curt, rapid phrases at her, unconsciously frowning down upon her in his earnestness. She caught herself dumbly wondering whether the jury found him as hard to resist, when he pleaded for others, as she did, when he pleaded for himself.

"It is the same old story, Mildred, but I can't help it. I can't keep away. Something stronger than I am drives me out here, once in so often, to try, try again—just to ask the stereotyped question, Mildred, and receive the stereotyped answer. It is good, wholesome discipline to hear you say 'No.' It keeps me from dreaming unwise dreams for at least two or three weeks. I can hear it afterwards, when I am alone, down to the very inflection of your voice—not angry or flippant, or unkind, but just a calm, level negative, with a deadly finality about it. Oh, it's not your fault, I am persistent. Wait, please; let me finish. It won't take five minutes altogether. Five minutes out of a month isn't much to ask—five minutes into which to crowd a whole month's thought of you! For you haunt me so, Mildred, dear. You follow me, unawares, to my office. You look up at me from the pages of law-reports and revised statutes; you float in front of every deed or will that I draft.

"Oh, I know well enough that it is no use. It's rather cowardly of me to bother you like this. But when two or three weeks



DRAWN BY BERTRAM G. KNIGHT.

"It is the same old story, Mildred."

go by and I haven't seen you, I begin to let the foolish, unfounded hopes spring up again. I begin to picture you with the old look in your eyes, the yielding look you used to have before things happened that changed you so. For one thing I will swear to, Mildred, there was a time when you did care, and you can't deny it. And so the impulse to come grows and grows upon me, until I cannot bear it any longer. I say to myself: 'Perhaps if I ask her once more—just this one last time—she will change her mind, and change the whole face of the world with it.' But when I come, I feel at once the uselessness of it all!"

Suddenly the girl interrupted him:

"Oh please, please, Gordon, not to-night; I can't listen to any more to-night!"

"You don't need to. I am answered already. I might as well be going now, before anybody else comes. You are very patient with me, Mildred. You have helped me to pull myself together for another month. But I won't promise not to come back and ask you again, at the end of it. You mustn't grudge me the scant comfort of asking you. After all, it doesn't hurt anybody but myself!"

"What right have you to say that it hurts no one but you?" cried the girl, piteously, the last vestige of her self-control slipping from her. The varied strains and disappointments of the evening had been too great; she was at the end of her forces. "Oh, Gordon, why will you make it so cruelly hard for me to do what is right? Why will you force me to own that I do care—to-night of all nights—when I have just been shown so plainly how unfit I am to be your wife?"

Amazement, incredulity, nascent hope struggled for supremacy in Dexter's agitated face.

"Mildred, do you realize what you are saying—what you are allowing me to think? Do you really mean that you do care for me, that you have cared all these long wretched months? Then it is you, not I, who have been cruelly hard on both of us, for the sake of some silly scruple that ought not to have held us apart two minutes! Ah, Mildred, dear, how could you?"

For all their tenderness, his reproachful words stung the girl with a sense of keen

injustice. She shrank away from the arms that would have drawn her to him, and sprang to her feet, dumbly fighting down the weakness of tears, the hysterical incoherence, the pent-up emotion that clamored for expression.

"Unfit to be my wife? What melodramatic nonsense! Won't you explain yourself? Won't you tell me what it is all about?" the perplexed man urged her gently.

With a pathetic little gesture, she indicated the vacant chairs around them, symbols of hope deferred.

"Look at this empty room, Gordon! Isn't that answer enough? Doesn't it show you the impossibility of what you are asking? Can't you see how wicked and selfish I should be, if I even listened to you?" The words which at first refused to come, now poured themselves out, in a turbulent, headlong torrent. "Two hundred invitations, Gordon; more than two hundred! And out of all the people who used to pretend to like me, not a man or a woman has taken the trouble to come—excepting you; and even you don't count; you didn't remember about it, you just blundered in. Oh, I have had my lesson to-night, I have been taught my place! It serves me right for dreaming just for a few days that I still had some claim to a little happiness!"

"But, dear girl, this is the sheerest folly! Just because a lot of lazy people won't go fourteen miles out of town, on a freezing winter-night, you make tragedy of it; you twist it into a deliberate insult, a sort of defamation of character. You really can't be serious, Mildred? You are too sensible to mean it. I am not denying that it is too bad to have gone to a lot of trouble and then to have nobody show up. But, after all, this wasn't a formal party; it was just one of a series of 'At Homes.' Nobody was bound to come on any particular night. Come, Mildred, be fair about it. I never complained when you told me you didn't love me, but I won't be put off for a reason that is worse than no reason at all."

"You don't understand, Gordon. You don't know how much it meant to me, to-night. I had grown tired of being brave, cut off from everything that used to make

up life, and little by little I found myself thinking that perhaps I was too morbidly sensitive—perhaps I was foolish to drop everybody and go away, just because the Jaffreys and a few others chose to be horrid. Finally the idea came to me, to put them all to the test with these 'Days-at-Home.' I struggled with the temptation for weeks before I mustered courage to mail the cards. And afterwards, I felt as if I were undergoing a sort of ordeal. I knew how the poor old women must have felt in the witchcraft days, when they were being tried by fire.

"I didn't mean to be unreasonable, Gordon. I didn't expect any great number of them to come. Even a bare half-dozen of our old set would have seemed like an ovation. But do you know just what has happened to my poor little 'Thursdays-at-Home?' The first, on January 10th, was so soon after the holidays that I wasn't surprised that nobody came except some church people, the minister's wife, and the Sunday-school superintendent. Two weeks ago was the day of the big snow-storm; it was almost a blizzard out here. I didn't even make preparations. But to-night I was just silly enough to count on having a crowd. It is a perfect night, in spite of the cold. And yet, even here in town, not a person has taken the trouble to come.

"And of all the people I really care about: Kittie Carleton, Helen Watson, Ned Warburton, all the old crowd, not one has sent a note, a line, not even the formal acknowledgement of a card. No, Gordon, don't tell me that it is all accidental, that it means nothing. Perhaps you wouldn't mind a snub like this, but I do mind; I mind desperately. I was so tired of being isolated, I rebelled against it. But I have been punished for my weakness. Don't you see, Gordon, that I must put you out of my thoughts, that I must never listen to you again? Don't you see that I can't let you ruin your career by marrying a girl with a big, ugly blot on her name—a girl whom society will not recognize because it believes her poor, dead father was—a thief?"

With a piteous finality the girl turned from him and stared with unseeing eyes

out of the window, down the long, white streak of snow, that stretched alluringly towards New York. The man stood behind her in silence, choosing his next words, realizing that she was overwrought, that she was bitterly wounded, that a hasty, tactless phrase might do irreparable harm.

And as they stood thus, both gazing unconsciously down the long, white avenue, two dusky specks evolved themselves out of the dim distance, expanded visibly into creeping blots against the snow, moving shadows, hurrying shapes, that rapidly took on definite form and meaning and human interest. Two rival sleighing-parties were racing merrily down the long, gradual declivity, to the accompaniment of jingling bells, light laughter, and the joyous discord of many horns. They were distant not fifty yards from Mildred's home, when the horses of the leading sleigh, startled perhaps by the inky shadows of bare branches cast by a swaying arc-light; perhaps rebelling at one burst too many of the strident merriment behind them, swerved violently to the right. There followed the shock of splintering wood, the confusion of plunging horses, then the shouted commands of men, the nervous screams of women. Stirred to forgetfulness of self, the watching man and girl sprang to the window, straining to see the extent of the catastrophe.

"Oh, Gordon, isn't it dreadful? Is anyone hurt, do you think? I almost hate to look.

"It seems to be a bad spill. The horses are all mixed up and two of them have fallen. I think one of the sleighs is overturned. They are all crowding around and bending over something.

"They are taking someone out from under it—a woman, Gordon—Oh, she must be all right, she is standing up and brushing off the snow. Do go out and ask them if there is anything we can do?"

"Wait, two of the men are coming this way. There isn't another house in sight with a light burning. They will probably want to use your telephone."

The two strangers hesitated at the gate, then came swiftly up the path. Mildred met them at the door, with Gordon close behind her. The taller of the two men,

with a frankly Western accent, rapidly stated the case. No one was hurt, but the ladies were startled and badly shaken. It would take some time to repair damages. Meanwhile, might they come in out of the cold? He was interrupted by an astonished outcry from his companion:

"Why, Gordon Dexter, what in the name of wonder are you doing here?"

With a little scream of delight, Mildred sprang impulsively forward. "It is Ned Warburton, Gordon, and he doesn't remember me!"

But the enthusiasm of his greeting, the next moment, emphatically contradicted her. Yes, he was just the same, impulsive, irrepressible Ned Warburton, the life of their old-time gatherings! Here at least was one of the old set who had not changed.

"And there are a good many others who will vote our break-down a piece of good luck, when they learn that you are here," Warburton affirmed, when they had again caught their breath, after their mutual astonishment, and he had sufficiently recalled his manners to introduce Sterling, the big Westerner.

"Don't stop for introductions," ordered Mildred gayly, her fingers tingling from Sterling's cordial grip. "Don't keep those poor girls out there another minute in the cold. Who are there that I know?"

Five minutes later, she found that she knew practically every one of them. They were all there, the old friends that she had so long craved a glimpse of—Kittie Carleton, Helen Watson, a dozen others, crowding around her, clinging to her, greeting her with a sincerity, an undreamed-of warmth that was rapidly restoring her faith in human nature. All talked at once, with the hysterical gayety that was a natural reaction from the shock; and each in turn must needs add a comment upon the extraordinary coincidence of being flung into the snow almost in front of Mildred's door-step.

"And that was not the only odd coincidence, Miss Earl," interposed the big Westerner. "For, five minutes before the accident they had all been talking about you with so much enthusiasm that, with very natural curiosity, I was begging Miss Carleton to tell me more about you, when the crash came!"

"It was this way, Mildred, dear," Kittie Carleton hastened to explain. "You see, we had all planned to take you by surprise, on the night of your next 'At Home'—the 14th, you know, just a week from to-night. But none of us had ever been out here, and as we drove along, some one wondered whether we should pass your house. And then, of course, we just naturally had to say a few nice things about you, though you didn't half-deserve them, after the way you—"

Mildred looked at her in a helpless daze, "The night of my next 'At Home?'" she questioned uncertainly. "But it isn't next week. You have all made a mistake, it is to-night."

Miss Carleton glanced around the room, shrewdly noting the signs of patient preparation.

"I don't see how that could be," she said quite positively. "*Second and Fourth Thursdays*, you said on the cards, didn't you? Well, to-night is only the 7th of the month. It looks as if the mistake were yours."

"But it is just two weeks since my last 'Thursday,'" protested Mildred feebly. The true explanation of all the seeming rudeness and neglect forced itself upon her, overwhelming her with sudden gladness.

"Of course it is. Don't you realize that there are five Thursdays in January this year? Oh, Mildred, you'll never hear the last of this! Don't they have such things as calendars out in the suburbs?"

Hovering on the border-line between tears and laughter, Mildred flung both arms wide open, in an all-embracing gesture of welcome. "Oh, you dear, good people," she said tremulously, "what do I care about calendars and Thursdays and days of the months? I have missed you all so much, and planned so long, and wanted you so badly: It doesn't matter now what you thought or how you happened to come. The all-important fact to me is that you are here: The parlors are both cleared for dancing; the piano is just begging for some one to play a waltz; and there is a supper that I worked all the morning to prepare, which simply must be eaten: What are you going to do about it?"

"It seems to me," said the big Westerner, with breezy practicality, "that since Miss



DRAWN BY BERTRAM G. KNIGHT

They were all there, the old friends

Earl has taken the trouble to prepare the supper, it is certainly up to us to stay and eat it for her!"

Not until afterwards did Mildred realize her serious shortcomings as a hostess. Who officiated at the piano, who took partners for waltz or two-step, who presided over the salad and sandwiches and ice-cream, she never distinctly knew. The minutes slipped away in a golden dream; for the world had restored her to its favor; Gordon was with her, and she was free to listen, free to accept happiness. As through a mist, she caught glimpses of her mother's face, borrowing brightness from the gay young life around her, and heard her mother's voice, not querulous now but full of the old-time suavity, urging upon the guests a second plate of salad, because "no one could make such mayonnaise as Mildred!"

It was long past midnight when Gordon Dexter stopped them all for a last word,

as they crowded together in the hall at parting.

"Miss Earl has authorized me to make an announcement," he said, with an exultant tremor in his voice. "We both wanted you to be the first people to hear about it—you couldn't have heard much sooner, for we didn't know it ourselves until to-night. I don't think you will have much difficulty in guessing," he was openly holding Mildred's hand. "But the invitations will be out sometime in June, and you are all to be included!"

"Make it the Second Thursday for good luck," suggested Sterling.

"Oh, no! I might blunder again about the date," protested Mildred.

"So long as you are a week ahead of time, I, for one, shall not complain!" said Gordon.

And the big Westerner voiced the general sentiment when he called for "Three cheers for Second Thursdays, especially when they are a week ahead of time!"

Miss Evangeline

BY OLIVIER CURWOOD

Author of "Captain Kidd of the Underground," etc.

HER name was Josephine Morse. Somebody nicknamed her "Evangeline." The name fitted, and stuck. She had a demure little mouth, eyes that dropped coyly when one looked at her too hard, and a way of using them that made you think of a little girl bred in the atmosphere of a Sunday school. She was a good cook. Also, as nearly every man of the crew of the *Gwenhiddy* could testify, she was a past-master at the art of snapping human heartstrings. One after another they had fallen in love with her until only the patriarch wheelman and the benedicts were left unscathed. After a time the *Gwenhiddy's* men became acclimated, as it were, and ceased lying awake nights. Thenceforth they took an unrighteous pleasure in witnessing the mental agonies of others. They hailed each new addition to the crew with joy; they accepted him as a brother; heaped favors upon him, and quickly paved the way that led him to Miss Evangeline. Then they

watched, and gurgled foolishly from the beginning; and nudged one another until ribs were sore; and roared when they were out of the victim's hearing. And when that victim finally returned to his sanity, a little tired and heartsick for a time, they would generously heap their sympathy upon him, and tell him to brace up, for another would be coming along soon and he could see just what kind of a fool he had been.

Yet nothing was laid up against Miss Evangeline. If she were wicked, men could not see wherein her sinning lay. Johnson, a new deck-hand from Duluth, had been the last to succumb; and when in the crew's quarters he raised his voice in profane denunciation of the young woman in the cook's shanty, half-a-dozen rough faces were turned on him in glowering disapprobation, and one huge hand seized him by the scruff of the neck in a way that showed what he was up against. It was popular favor, spelled in capital letters. That was

the trouble. No man could openly say that Miss Evangeline had done him wrong; and yet she had made them all suffer, with here and there an interesting exception. But there was no one among them who could bring himself to describe just how she had done it. One of them, in a poetic moment, said that the mischief was caused by the deep blue shining softly from under her long lashes, and by half-spoken words, and little trembles and throbs that came in her voice when walking with one in the cool and quiet of evening.

Whatever it was, Miss Evangeline showed no favoritism in its distribution. When her eyes were lifted from her potato-pan there was the same adorable look in them, whether they rested upon a scrub-man or the *Gwenhiddy's* captain. Perhaps, when the captain passed, her glance was not quite so long, but there seemed to be more in it. At least, the captain thought so. His name was McVicker. He was a tall young man, ten years older than he looked, and early in the season he had fallen with the others, but more quietly. Only Miss Evangeline knew of it. With a little tremor in her voice, which had sounded almost like a sob, she had told him that it was not in her heart to become Mrs. McVicker. She would be a sister to him, if that would help McVicker, but never anything more. She did not believe that women could trust sailors, and especially captains. Besides, it was her ambition to discover a missionary some day, and marry him; but she did not think that McVicker would make a good missionary. She asked him to be honest, and to tell her if he thought so himself. Could he get up and talk to the heathen? Could he save souls, for her sake? She had never spoken of these things to others, she said, but she knew that she could trust him.

Now McVicker was anything but a godly man. He hated missionaries, and one of the pictures which he treasured on his cabin wall was that of a group of naked savages sitting expectantly around a big, black, boiling-pot. Yet he did not give up hope. He told Miss Evangeline this, and she gave him a warm little squeeze of her hand. When McVicker took this for something more than was intended, she gently informed him that it was only a sisterly squeeze, and that never, never, so long as

they both lived, could she think of marrying him.

It was after this that the desperate idea came buzzing into McVicker's brain. It kept him awake one whole night. He was not a man of deep morals, so his conscience did not interfere with the working out of his scheme. Worse schemes had occurred to him during the past month, but they had been reluctantly dropped because of the danger they called upon himself. But he could see no flaw in this one, and he believed that it would work. He called in Muldoon, the first mate, for whom the sun rose and set with McVicker, and together the two talked it over. Some weeks previous to this Muldoon had usurped the berth of another Irishman, whose name was Michael O'Keefe, as first mate of the *Gwenhiddy*; and in leaving, O'Keefe had given him a fearful beating to remember him by. So when Muldoon learned that O'Keefe was to suffer in the captain's scheme, he was filled with ghoulish glee. O'Keefe's story was history. He had taken Miss Evangeline even more seriously than the others, and in a moment of rage and despair had thrown up his job. The captain, who disliked him, lost no time in wiring for Muldoon. After a few hours the mate was sorry, and repented; but McVicker refused to reinstate him, and the Irishman's only balm was the drubbing which he lay in wait to give Muldoon. It was a beautiful fight. Unfortunately the second mate butted in, and got a broken jaw for his trouble. At the time of the council in the cabin he was convalescing in a Marine City hospital; which was a mighty good thing for the scheme, the captain told Muldoon.

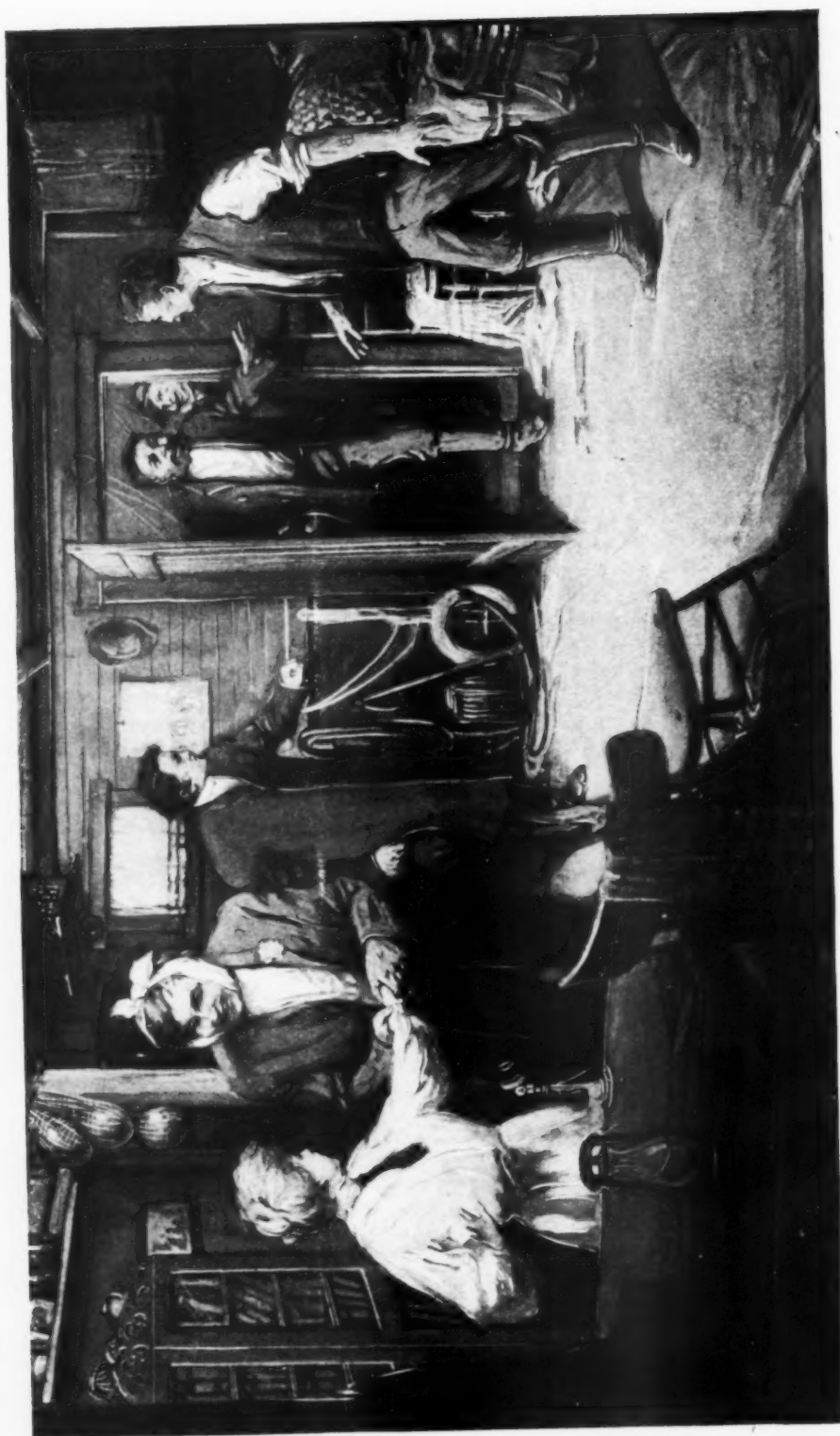
Two days later the *Gwenhiddy* put in at Cleveland. McVicker himself went ashore and hurried to a telegraph-office. From this place he sent two messages. The first ran as follows:

MICHAEL O'KEEFE,
Seamen's Inn,
Sarnia, Ont.

Dearest Michael. Have changed my mind. Will marry you. Board *Gwenhiddy* at Sarnia. I will have a minister ready. Will be married on board.

With love,

EVANGELINE.



Bikins succeeded in capturing one of her hands

ILLUSTRATION BY E. MARTIN HENKINGS

The second telegram was longer. It was addressed to the minister of the little country town from which Evangeline had come. This little village, twenty miles back in the farming country from Port Huron, was a place which the girl seemed fond of dwelling upon in her conversations with the captain. She had described it to him until he knew just how the narrow, dusty road wound up around a hill and down again past the scattered homes of the villagers, the general store, and the church. On one side of this church, so near that one could hear the voices of the choir on Sunday, was Evangeline's home; on the other side was the minister's. McVicker chuckled as he thought how masterfully he had succeeded in getting the minister's name only a day or two before, and when he handed his message through the receiver's window he could not refrain from passing a cigar along with it.

"Just chase it along in a hurry!" he said.

The clerk grinned as he counted the words.

The message read:

REV. EDWARD DUTTON,
Fairhill, Mich.

Dear Mr. Dutton. On September 12th I am going to be married on board the *Gwenhiddy* at Port Huron. I want you to perform the ceremony. Board boat afternoon or evening that day. Am depending on you and know you won't fail me. With kindest regards.

JOSEPHINE MORSE.

Fifteen minutes later the third message was turned in at a rival office a few blocks away.

SAMUEL BILKINS.

St. Joseph's Hospital,
Marine City, Mich.

Dearest Sam. Have changed my mind. Will marry you. Board *Gwenhiddy* at Port Huron. I will have a minister ready. Will be married on board. With love.

EVANGELINE.

Captain McVicker purposely held the *Gwenhiddy* a day overtime in Cleveland after the sending of the messages. The trip across Erie was made with a slowness that aroused speculation on the part of the crew. Another twenty-four hours was tactfully lost at Detroit. It was late in the afternoon of the fourth day before the freighter

neared Port Huron, and McVicker figured that he had given his victims plenty of time to arrive there ahead of him. Several times during this day Muldoon visited the captain in his cabin. Once he brought with him two members of the crew in whom they both placed confidence. These men were detailed to pick up Bilkins and the reverend gentleman in a small boat, and to handle them according to certain instructions.

Immediately after supper the captain went to the galley and asked Miss Evangeline if she would do some copying for him that evening. The work was important, and would not permit of delay. Of course, if she had another engagement—

But Miss Evangeline had none. She would be only too happy to assist the captain. There was the deepest sincerity in her blue eyes when she said it, and she lost no time in taking the papers and retiring to her cabin.

McVicker whistled and sang by turns when he had reentered the seclusion of his own room. In an ebullition of joy he called up Muldoon by telephone and told him how beautifully he had "caged" the girl. The rawness of thus speaking of his future wife did not strike him. The desire of possession, the passion which the girl's beauty had aroused in him, filled him with but little sentiment. The hour was fast approaching when she would belong to him, and this knowledge intoxicated him to a point where his finer sensibilities were deadened. He paced up and down the softly carpeted floor, smoking a strong cigar, and occasionally peering out through one of the little windows at the lights along the shores of the river. Thus he kept himself in touch with the progress to Port Huron. As the time for action approached he became a little excited; his face was uncomfortably warm; when he picked up a paper he noticed that it trembled in his hand. This was unnatural. It was something he had not expected, and with a laugh that still more betrayed his uneasiness he went to the buffet and turned out a glass of liquor. He forgot to take the usual chaser. What if his scheme should fail, after all? The doubt had not entered his mind before. Was it possible that Miss Evangeline could find some way out of the

meshes he had laid for her? He went over the plot carefully; he could see no loophole of escape—if he played his part right.

The tinkling of the telephone interrupted his thoughts. Nervously he placed the receiver to his ear.

"Hello!" he called.

The muscles of his face became tense in an instant as he listened to the voice at the other end. It was Miss Evangeline.

"I'm up in the pilot house," he heard. "I've forgotten which you wanted—two copies of the letters for Detroit, or only one of those and two of the Buffalo papers. Don't you think I'm stupid?"

He heard her laugh. That laugh was one of the things that made people love her. It was as if she were laughing with her heart, and always at something she loved. It sounded so now—more than ever before McVicker thought. It went throbbing through his soul.

"Two of the Detroit papers, dear!" he replied.

The last word slipped from his lips unintentionally. After he had hung up the receiver he was glad that he had spoken it.

He helped himself to another glass of liquor, and lit a fresh cigar. After a little he heard the coughing rumble of the freighter's engines, and taking up the paper he began to read. The *Gwenhiddy* was slowing down. Before she stopped McVicker rose and drew the curtains at the windows. It seemed an hour before he felt the throbbing under him again. As a matter of fact it had been only twenty minutes. Soon he knew that the vessel was in motion and was taking up her course for Sarnia. He no longer read; the print before his eyes seemed only a blur and without motion or sound he listened to catch the tramp of footsteps, or a knock at the door. The latter came a few moments later, and in a loud voice McVicker called, "Come in!"

The door opened and Muldoon's red face shone in it. He entered quickly, and behind him followed a tall, thin young man, whose face was rather pale, and whose eyes betrayed him laboring under an unusual strain of some kind. He looked eagerly around the room before he finally rested his gaze upon the captain. McVicker had not expected a young man, particularly one who was good looking,

though thin. The minister advanced and held out a card.

"My name is Dutton—" he said, "the Rev. Mr. Dutton."

McVicker regarded him blankly. His jaw fell in astonishment. He rose from his chair slowly, surprise and curiosity showing plainly in his face. He did not proffer his hand, but glanced, as if for an explanation, to Muldoon.

"Gentleman said he was expected aboard, sir, so I brought 'im 'ere," said the mate.

Mr. Dutton stood as if transfixed, staring from the mate to the captain in the interval of silence that followed.

"Why—didn't you expect me?" he asked.

"Surprise to me," said McVicker.

"Isn't this the *Gwenhiddy*?" cried the minister, pulling a yellow slip of paper from his pocket. "And haven't you a young lady aboard by the name of Josephine Morse?"

He handed the paper to the captain. It was McVicker's telegram. Slowly McVicker read it.

"Yes, this is the *Gwenhiddy*, and we have a young woman aboard whose name is Josephine Morse—but I don't know anything about this!" Suddenly the captain's fist fell with a bang upon the table. "By thunder! I wonder—"

He turned to the mate.

"Muldoon, bring in Miss Evangeline, will you?"

He fell to studying the telegram, while Mr. Dutton rather eagerly watched the door through which Muldoon had disappeared. When approaching footsteps sounded without, the young divine fell a little to one side, and a nervous flush appeared in either cheek. The door opened and Miss Evangeline came in ahead of Muldoon. She was breathing quickly from the exertion of a run across the deck; her eyes shone with laughing fun; and in one hand she held a few of the papers she had been copying. Suddenly she saw the minister, and with a gasp stopped half-way to McVicker's table. As she did so, the mate left the cabin, closing the door behind him. For an instant the girl stared, as if she refused to believe her eyes; then her breath came again, quicker than before, and the papers in her hand slipped to the floor. The fun went out of her eyes in a flash.



DRAWN BY E. MARTIN HENNINGS

"I love you; I want you to marry me!"

"Mr. Dutton!" she exclaimed, in a low queer voice.

"Miss Josephine!" replied the minister, coming to her with an outstretched hand. "You see, I didn't fail you. I—I—want to congratulate you!"

The girl seemed too agitated to speak. She allowed the minister to take her hand, and when she turned, her eyes full of inquiry, from him to the captain, a pathetic tremor passed over her lips, and a hot, nervous glow mantled her cheeks. There was something of pained displeasure in McVicker's gaze. He seemed to reproach her before he had spoken.

"And I want to congratulate you, too, Miss Josephine," he said. "It is a great surprise to me, I should have thought—"

He had nicely prepared his speech, but the throbbing of the freighter's deck involuntarily brought his eyes to one of the curtained windows. They were stopping before Sarnia. O'Keefe would soon be aboard. There was no time to lose, so he held out the minister's telegram to the girl.

"You should have told me something about it!" he concluded.

There were a few moments of tense silence, broken only by McVicker striking a match with which to light his cigar. Then

came a little stifled cry from the girl; she crumpled the telegram in her hand; her bosom throbbed with sudden excitement; the flush in her cheeks went as precipitately as it had come, and when she spoke her voice trembled.

"I—I—didn't send that!" she gasped.

The captain rose and came to her side, smiling frankly down into her face.

"There, there, Miss Josephine," he said with friendly banter in his voice. "You've played us a pretty little joke, and we surely won't get angry with you! Of course, you know that I am very sorry." There was a suggestive emphasis in what he said. "But I'm going to turn the cabin over to you," he added, "and we'll have the biggest supper the *Gwenhiddy* can put up. Only we'd like to know: Who is the lucky man?"

The girl drew back from him; her breath came in sobbing breaks.

"I tell you, I didn't write that!" she cried. "I didn't! Oh, won't you believe me?"

She turned to the minister. Her attitude was almost imploring. The captain was surprised at the change which came over his visitor. There was an aggressive gleam in his eyes as they met his own, and it was with a certain feeling of relief that he welcomed a loud knock at the door.

"Come in!" he called.

Muldoon's face appeared again.

"A gentleman to see you, sir. Shall I let 'im—"

Over his shoulder peered the bandaged visage of the broken-jawed mate, Samuel Bilkins.

In an instant he had seen the girl, and with a noise that would have been a cry of joyful greeting had it not been for the rigidity of his face, he thrust himself into the cabin, and with only a sheepish nod at the captain, and an exploring look at the minister, hurried to Evangeline's side. He succeeded in capturing one of her hands before she had recovered from her surprise; in fact, the girl was now well lost in panic, and he was still holding her hand when another disturbance came from outside, and Michael O'Keefe bolted through the door, followed by Muldoon.

"Howdy, captain!" he bellowed jovially. His face radiated happiness; he thrust out an arm as big as an ordinary man's leg, with a huge red fist at the end of it. "This is the preacher, I suppose," he said, taking in the clerical gentleman as McVicker shook hands with him. "I'm glad to see you, sir!"

He whirled about to give the Rev. Mr. Dutton the friendliness of his grip, and beheld Bilkins and the girl. For a moment he stood as if somebody had stunned him with a stone; then he came up to them, shoved Bilkins aside, and made an effort to kiss Miss Evangeline. With a shriek the girl fled toward the door. O'Keefe followed her, and with Bilkins close behind carried his pursuit to the deck.

Clerical urbanity had left Mr. Dutton's thin face. He advanced to McVicker with flashing eyes.

"What does this mean?" he demanded.

The captain shrugged his shoulders.

"The Lord only knows, sir, I don't!" he replied. "Listen!"

From outside came the sound of loud voices. Among them McVicker recognized that of Muldoon, and he could scarcely repress a smile of satisfaction.

Muldoon was playing game. For a few moments the two men stood in silence, each with his face turned to the door; then a feminine cry arose above a growing tumult of blows and scuffling, and the minis-

ter darted out, his long coat fluttering behind him, his face alight with peculiar enthusiasm. He did not pause until he was lost among the shadowy figures amidships. Hardly had he gone when Muldoon ran up and handed the captain the two telegrams which had been sent to Bilkins and O'Keefe. An exultant grin was on his countenance.

"They're mixin' beautiful!" he chuckled. "O'Keefe has broke Sam's jaw ag'in 'n' the preacher's mixin' with O'Keefe!"

McVicker went inside and locked his door. He laughed aloud as he recovered the telegram dropped by Miss Evangeline, and smoothed it out with the other two upon the table.

Thus far his scheme had worked to perfection. He had not figured on the fight, which was also helping him exceedingly; neither had he hoped that the Rev. Mr. Dutton would unconsciously lend himself to his plot to the extent of mixing up in a battle, out of which he was pretty sure to emerge with but little resemblance to his former self. The rest should be easy for Muldoon—and himself. He could see only one avenue of escape from Miss Evangeline's present predicament, and that led to the happy ending.

Impatiently he waited for her to come to him. That she would come—and soon—he had no doubt—a poor frightened little thing, all atremble with the horror which Muldoon would impress upon her, and craving his protection.

After a little he heard the knock which he was expecting, and opened the door. Miss Evangeline entered. She was as white as a sheet, and one of Muldoon's hands was laid protectingly upon her arm.

The mate spoke in a low voice, ostensibly for the captain's ears alone, but loud enough for the girl to hear.

"They're raisin' hell!" he said. "I don't believe it's safe—" He paused suggestively. "Better keep her here for a time, don't you think? Part of the crew are siding with Bilkins and O'Keefe. It's mutiny, by Heavens! They say she's played 'em dirt, and she's got to—"

He lowered his voice. The two men walked to the door and for a time continued their conversation in a whisper. Then Muldoon went out and the captain again turned the lock.



DRAWN BY E. MARTIN HENNINGS

McVicker opened it and read

Miss Evangeline had buried her face in her hands when McVicker came back to her. For a time the man stood silently beside her, gazing with rapturous eyes down upon the shining coils of hair twisted wreath-like about the beautiful head. His lips parted and his heart hammered excitedly as he leaned gloatingly over the creature whom he regarded as already in his possession. He could hardly resist the temptation of clasping her to him, but his saner judgment prevailed, and he walked quietly around the table and seated himself opposite her. When she lifted her tear-stained face he was toying with the telegrams. The last two he shoved across the table. What was written upon them did not seem to astonish Miss Evangeline. She was already at the breaking-point of distress. McVicker saw this with keen satisfaction.

"I wish you would explain," he said. He allowed a reflection of suspicion to creep into his voice. "I don't understand this little game, and it's costing trouble—a lot of trouble!"

"Neither do I understand!" cried the girl. "Oh, Captain McVicker, won't you be-

lieve me when I tell you that I didn't send them?"

She clasped her hands pleadingly, and it suddenly struck the captain that just now she seemed more like a school-girl than a young woman for whose love he was fighting. For an instant he felt himself losing ground. Her eyes brimming with tears, her voice trembling sobbingly, and the prayerful entreaty of her gaze suddenly awoke a healthier sentiment in him, and he rose to his feet and paced nervously back and forth across the cabin. For the moment Muldoon was forgotten. But the tingling of the telephone recalled him. He was still attending to his end of the game. It also swung McVicker back into the scheme. He placed the receiver to his ear, Miss Evangeline watching and listening with nervous anticipation shining in her eyes.

"Hello—hello—" he called.

The girl heard the answering voice. She leaned forward to catch the words; her eyes were on a level with the captain's, and slowly she saw come into them a look which reflected terror in her own. When the voice had ceased, McVicker spoke softly.

"Well, I'll be—" Then he added, "Keep them off the forward deck, Muldoon, even if you have to use your gun. Miss Evangeline is safe in my cabin!"

He hung up the receiver, and in her questioning eagerness the girl touched one of his hands with her own. McVicker seized her little fingers in one of his huge palms, and for a full half-minute looked across the table straight into her eyes.

"Yes, little girl, I do believe you," he said finally. "I don't believe you sent the telegrams. But somebody did, and we can't say what the result will be. O'Keefe swears vengeance—because he believes you've hoaxed him. Bilkins says that if you don't marry him there'll be—well, something to pay! And a part of the crew have sided with them and more are coming over. They are agreed that you have flirted abominably; they believe that you have purposely led them to make fools of themselves, and almost to a man, Muldoon says, they demand that you marry either Bilkins or O'Keefe. If you don't—"

The captain shrugged his shoulders. To the girl there was terrible significance in his silence,

"And if—if—I don't?" she gasped.

"Well, you never can tell," replied McVicker. "They're desperate—O'Keefe and Bilkins, I mean; and all of the men think you sent the telegrams. When men are like that—"

He interrupted himself again and once more began pacing back and forth across the cabin. Every move he made, almost every breath he drew, was eagerly watched by the girl. Her heart beat faster when she saw him peer cautiously out through one of the little windows; and she thrilled with fear when he moved to the buffet and took from it a revolver, which he carefully examined and placed in his pocket. When he came back to the table she did not attempt to withdraw the hand which he pressed tenderly in both of his own.

"I can see a way out of all this trouble, Evangeline," he said, in a voice filled with the passion he felt. "The men are right—you must marry somebody. It is the only way to save yourself. But you need not marry Bilkins; you need not marry O'Keefe. I love you! I want you to marry me!"

The girl's pale cheeks flushed. The hand

he held twitched nervously, and she made a small effort to withdraw it.

Still she remained silent. Her eyes met his own, steady and questioning. She saw the passion in his face, a lurking fire which made her shudder as she lowered her glance; something rose in her bosom, strangling in its intensity, for she read in McVicker's gaze the deadly sentiment which she feared in Bilkins, O'Keefe, and the crew. A new terror filled her. The sound of loud voices and running feet outside increased her fear. In desperation she again lifted her eyes to her companion. McVicker had seen his mistake, and there was the old friendliness in his voice when he spoke.

"I don't mean that I won't fight for you, whatever may happen, little girl," he said. "I swear that no harm shall come to you, if I can prevent it. But I love you—God! how I love you!"

He released her hand and rose to his feet. The girl slipped from her chair and stood beside the table, trembling, her hands clasped upon her breast.

"As my wife—my betrothed—I could explain everything!" cried McVicker. "I could say that we had planned to get married; that some member of the crew had discovered our secret; that he had written the telegrams, either as a joke or from jealousy, and the men would have to believe me Evangeline—won't you? Won't you?"

He came toward her, his arms held out. For a moment the girl seemed yielding to his entreaty. The proximity of his triumph intoxicated McVicker, and with a cry he caught her to him.

"To-night, Evangeline!" he whispered. "To-night! We will be married quietly, in the cabin, and to-morrow we'll announce it to the men. Tell me 'Yes,' sweetheart!"

"No—no—no!" sobbed the girl. "Oh, not now—not now!"

"Yes, to-night!" pleaded the captain.

Her silence filled him with joy. Behind him the telephone rang, and allowing Evangeline to slip from his arms into the chair he held the receiver to his ear. His face, turned from her, underwent a sudden change, in his heart he was blessing Muldoon. After a moment he signed for the girl to take the receiver. When she had done so, he called out.

"Repeat that, will you, Muldoon?"

The mate's heavy voice rumbled:

"I said that the men are making Bilkins 'n' O'Keefe toss up to see who's going to marry Miss Evangeline!" it said.

McVicker smiled as he took the receiver from the girl's trembling hand.

"We're going to fool 'em, Muldoon!"

Evangeline had risen, and as the captain turned, was retreating slowly toward the door. Her terror was complete; at least, so McVicker assured himself.

"If it must be to-night," she spoke, "you must let me go to my room!"

There was a strange thrill in her voice. Her hand was on the door knob when McVicker hastened to her.

"I must see you there safely," he said.

"You will prepare quickly, though?"

She bowed her head, as if in acquiescence, and the captain cautiously opened the door. Except for the man in the wheelhouse the forward deck was clear, and in the deep shadows the two hurried to Evangeline's cabin.

"You will be ready in an hour?"

"No, it will be two," replied the girl.

She had opened her door, and slipped in before the captain could detain her.

A few minutes later the door was slowly reopened. Inch by inch it swung inward, until Evangeline could sweep the starboard-deck, both forward and aft. Quietly she stole forth into the deep shadow of the cabin, and made her way cautiously in the direction of the captain's quarters until she stopped before the room occupied by the old wheelman. Gently she knocked upon the door, until a voice called from within.

"Hello! Who's there?"

"It's I, Mr. Richards—Evangeline," she replied softly, her lips close to the keyhole. "I want to speak with you, please!"

The wheelman, whose watch began at midnight, had retired, and she could hear him get out of his bunk and begin dressing. Soon he opened the door, and Evangeline entered. Half an hour later the door was opened again; the gray-headed seaman peered out, and after a satisfactory survey of the deck allowed the girl to pass him on her return to her own room. Then, even as cautiously, he came out himself, and hurried to the cabin which he had seen assigned to the young minister after that individual's

slight brush with O'Keefe, the former mate.

One of the two hours had passed when Evangeline, listening with throbbing heart heard a light knock upon her door. She opened it a trifle, and discerned the shadow-like form of the old wheelman disappearing into the gloom of the midship-deck.

She even fancied that she could see him after he had entered the darkness enshrouding the starboard-boat. Quietly she glided after him. From the opaqueness into which he had disappeared a figure emerged to meet her. She heard her name spoken softly; she fancied that she could see a pair of arms held out for her, and with an answering name falling from her lips she ran into them. For only an instant she was held in a man's strong embrace; a passionate kiss fell upon her upturned face and then they turned, hand in hand, and went to the starboard-rail.

Richards held the loosened boat-falls in his hands.

"Get in—quick!" he whispered.

Miss Evangeline ran to his side, and rising on tip-toe pressed her warm lips to his bearded cheek.

"Thank you, Mr. Richards! Thank you—thank you—" she breathed.

The man pulled her gently away, and lifted her into the boat. After he had followed her, the wheelman played out the falls, and the two drifted away.

Half an hour later the wheelman entered the captain's cabin. McVicker was flushed and joyful.

"What is it, Richards?" he asked.

The wheelman advanced, with a letter in his hand.

"Somebody knocked at my door a few minutes ago," he explained, "and when I dressed and went out this was hanging to the latch. It's addressed to you."

McVicker opened it, and read:

DEAR CAPTAIN:

I'm sure I don't know who sent those telegrams. But I'm awfully glad that they were sent. I don't believe that Mr. Dutton and I would ever have made up if it hadn't been for them. Mr. Dutton and I were engaged to be married. Then we quarreled because he refused to turn missionary. But he's promised now. I'm sorry we have to take one of your boats. We'll leave it somewhere at Port Huron. Thanks—and good-by.

EVANGELINE.

Benched

BY RICHARD BARKER SHELTON

Author of "Queechy the Unsaintly," etc.

ANSTRUTHER had known for a long time that the end was imminent. Silently, doggedly, he had fought for his old-time prestige. He had given up his two-cigars-a-day in the vain hope that such a course of abstemiousness might better his wind; he had consulted a physician in regard to his diet, with a view to reducing some of the weight he had taken on during the winter months; he had even arisen in the gray dawn of the summer mornings and jogged weary miles through the silent, deserted streets; and daily he was the first man to arrive at the ball-grounds for practice before the game.

Yet, with all his patient striving, Anstruther realized more and more, as the days went past, that he was a fallen idol. Somehow his old-time cunning was gone. He could no longer reach far out and scoop in low throws to first-base with that deftness and infallibility which had so often set the bleachers howling; indeed, of late, it had become alarmingly common for the ball to get away from him completely. Moreover, the weight he had taken on had made him correspondingly slow in his movements. Grounders to first-base territory, which up to this season he would have "eaten alive," to use the parlance of the bleacherites, now all too frequently rolled out to right-field to go down on the official score as "hits."

But worst of all, to Anstruther, was the change of attitude in the fans. It means much more to your professional ball-player, than is commonly supposed, to have the crowd "with him." That subtle, intangible sympathy that has its origin in the bleachers is a moral prop that nerves him to do his best; and when that moral prop is withdrawn and jeers and cat-calls replace it, it is an uphill fight for a player to reestablish himself in popular favor.

Anstruther, from his position at first-base, had noticed the tide of public sentiment setting steadily against him as the season advanced. In the early games, when a low-throw got through him or he failed to stop a smashing-grounder, the

crowd behind him would chirp encouragingly, "All right, Anse! Can't get everything, Anse!" But as the season wore on, the easy encouragement gave place to groans and disgusted murmurs, until now, even when a difficult ball to handle got away from him, there were cries of "Aw, git one once in awhile, won't yer!"

His batting, too, had fallen off markedly. In his effort to atone for his weakened fielding he was inclined to be rather too anxious to hit the ball. This had resulted in an appalling list of strike-outs and easy pop-flies to the infield. Perhaps the real truth of his position first flashed on Anstruther's mind that afternoon when he had beaten out a scratch-hit, and, standing on the bag, he had heard a shrill voice on the bleachers behind him exclaiming, "Gee! Old ice-wagon gits a hit!" At any rate, the remark had stung him cruelly, and after the game he had induced the manager to send two of the younger pitchers to the grounds every morning to give him batting-practice.

There had been some rumors current that a new first-baseman, named Carney, had been signed from one of the minor Western leagues, but rumors were always in circulation about the dressing-room, and Anstruther paid no attention to them. Sometime, somehow, he would get back into his old form. A man was not necessarily useless on the diamond because he was thirty-eight! There were several men in the league—first-class men, at that—who were past that age. He would show the fans there were some stunts left in him yet. It wasn't likely the management would turn him down simply because his work had been a trifle below the standard so far this season. He had played professional ball for eighteen years, nine of them with this very team. Twice he had led the league in batting, and four times his name had headed the list of fielding averages. That ought to count for something. Still, on the other hand, his playing this year had been off color. Of course there were disagreeable possibilities.

It was a hot Friday afternoon in August. Anstruther was early at the grounds; but early as he was, one other was there before him—a tall, red-headed young fellow wearing the uniform of the team. Probably a new pitcher, he told himself. He had heard two new ones had been signed. He went to the lockers under the grand-stand and donned his own field-togs. He was softening up his mitt with oil, when old Mike Sheedy, the ground-keeper, came in.

"Who's the new duck?" asked Anstruther carelessly.

"Ut's Carney, the new felly from the West," Sheedy replied almost apologetically.

Anstruther felt something tighten in his throat. Something hot seemed pressing his temples. The hand holding the oil-bottle trembled. The rumors, then, were true, and this was the end. Mike shuffled out with the marker in one hand and a pail of lime in the other, and Anstruther sat down heavily in one of the wooden chairs, staring blankly at the row of lockers before him. This was the end—the end. It was as if a curtain had fallen between himself and all the old life. There was, too, something of anger in his mind for this red-headed youngster, who was usurping his place. Then the boys came in—singly, by pairs, by threes, and began to dress noisily. There was the old, familiar stamping overhead. The stand was already beginning to fill.

When the boys went out to the field, Anstruther rose mechanically and went with them. In the preliminary practice he was sent to first. He was nervous and listless. Easy-grounders went through him; he dropped several perfect throws. He was glad when the gong sounded and they surrendered the field to the visiting team. He sat moodily under the awning, twirling his mitt and watching the practice of the visitors.

When the gong sounded for the final practice, the manager came across the field and the players grouped themselves about him. It was his custom to announce the line-up of the team just before this last practice. Anstruther rose from the bench and joined the group. Perhaps his fears were groundless. Perhaps they wouldn't turn him down, after all.

The manager unfolded the slip of paper in his hand and began to read. "Brewster—Corcoran," that was the battery. Then he paused a moment before he went on. Anstruther felt his heart beating uncomfortably. What would that next name be?

The manager cleared his throat.

"Carney!"—Anstruther turned silently and walked to the bench. Some of the boys turned to look after him. He fancied there was pity in their glances and it angered him. Hang it! They needn't waste any pity on him!

He sat on the bench trying to look nonchalant. He did not know that his face was white and his lips twitching. The team trotted out on the field and the manager came over to the bench. He sat down beside Anstruther.

"I hope you're not sore about this, Anstruther," he began.

"Me? Sore?" said Anstruther. "Sure not."

"Well, you see," the manager went on lamely, "I thought—that is, your game of late—"

"Sure! It's all right. I know how it is," said Anstruther.

The manager looked relieved.

"Have a cigar," he said, producing his case from an inner pocket.

Anstruther drew out a cigar and put it in the pocket of his uniform coat. He was glad when the manager rose and went to the other side of the field. He watched the game that afternoon like a man in a dream. He saw the new first-baseman gather in all kinds of throws, from the ground and in the air above his head; he saw Carney make a one-handed stop of a ground-ball that brought the crowd to its feet; and to cap the climax, it was a pretty single from Carney's bat that brought in the winning-run in the eighth inning.

The fans on the bleachers took to the new man from the outset. They gave him the glad hand and the encouragement that for nine years had been Anstruther's own. It made the man on the bench feel very old and very isolated.

Anstruther spent a sleepless night and a nervous morning. For the first time in his life he came late to the ball-grounds. He got into his uniform and went out on

the field just as the first practice was over. It was Saturday afternoon and already the bleachers were filled by the half-holiday crowd. The outfield was roped off and the overflow was beginning to stream out there. The manager came bustling up to Anstruther as the latter appeared on the field.

"Carney got a bad-bounding ball on the right shoulder just now," he said. "He's out of the game until Monday, sure. Go in and do your best, Anse. We want to-day's game badly."

Anstruther said nothing. It was a pity the ball hadn't dislocated Carney's neck, he told himself grimly; but anyway, this gave him a chance and he'd show them the game he could play if he wanted to. His nerves were atingle all over his body. He felt a glowing exhilaration as from some powerful stimulant. What if he were thirty-eight! He'd make some of those young upstarts look like thirty cents!

That day Anstruther played the game of his life. He covered his position perfectly in the field, and when the game was over the official score showed two singles and a three-bagger to his credit. He went to the lockers with the glowing feeling still upon him. At the door the manager drew him aside.

"Play as you did to-day," he chuckled, "and it's back to the west for Carney."

Anstruther laughed like a happy boy. "Just give me a show," he said as he slid into the dressing-room.

Near his own locker two men were standing. In the dim light he saw it was Carney and Bowers, a utility infielder. The former was speaking earnestly.

"I aint a knocker," he was saying, "and I aint looking to get no one benched, but I would like to get a show here. There aint much money in it out there, and I need all I can get just now. You see, I've got a wife and three kids—one of 'em sick. Yep, hip-disease. If I can make good here, it'll put me on easy-street."

He turned and recognized Anstruther standing there. Carney's face reddened.

He and the utility man went out, both of them rather embarrassed.

Anstruther dressed and went slowly down the street to his hotel. The nervous tension was over. He felt tired and old.

He realized now that his playing of the afternoon was something unnatural, unreal—that he had set a pace for himself he could not keep up. Then, too, Carney's earnest voice obtruded itself pertinaciously "I've got a wife and three kids—one of 'em sick."

He ate his supper abstractedly and went to his room. The cigar the manager had given him was still in his pocket. He took it out and rolled it thoughtfully between his thumb and finger. A wife and three kids—one of them with hip-disease, and Carney wanted a show to make good! He lighted the cigar. It didn't matter about his wind now. He was too old, anyway—a "has-been." The fans knew it, the manager knew it, and he knew it. It was hard to think of being out of it; still, it was coming soon, anyway.

He went down to the office and wrote two letters: one to his brother, who had long since offered him a place on his Wyoming ranch, and the other to the manager of the team. Something was choking in his throat as he stepped to the desk to drop them in the mail-box. He could see the ball-grounds—smooth, green, flooded with the afternoon sunshine; he could see the packed grand-stand and bleachers, the crowds behind the ropes in the outfield, the small urchins perched along the fence-top. He had never realized what all this meant to him, until now, when he was losing it forever.

The night-clerk was smiling knowingly as Anstruther came up. He had attended the game that afternoon.

"Great game you put up this afternoon, old man," he said familiarly. "Guess you stay on first all right, eh?"

Anstruther shook his head slowly.

"No, I'm out of it," he said. "They're going to give Carney a show."

Two Shots at "Carson's"

BY LEO CRANE

Author of "The Chevalier of the Golden Coin," etc.

BEYOND Carson's the sunlight filtered over a wide yellow plain. In the heat of the noontime a golden mist shimmered and floated as a veil drifting in the hot air, and the sheen of it pierced one's eyes with little shooting-pains. Through the mesh of this could be seen "Carson's place," low-huddled, the buildings a white blur without definite outline. Once a week Billy rode over, the gray dust of the ride upon him. It was hot play after a long week of hard work. But Billy knew at the end of the ride he would meet Frank Lovell; that they would have a quiet game, a smoke together, and that a peaceful silence would exist between them to be understood and spoken of afterward as "a talk."

Billy and Frank Lovell were friends. They had been so, firm and tried—the quiet undemonstrative sort—since Lovell's first coming into that country. Billy had been there a long time—long enough to seam his face with hard lines and to make of him a grave man. He was not spoken of by every one as a good fellow. There was a certain deliberate way with him, however, which compelled those who did not approve of his methods to avoid criticism. Frank Lovell was a gay chap, impulsive, great-hearted. Billy liked him at first, loved him at last. These were two men, and their love was a stern affair not unlike a truce between nations. Once a week Billy would ride over to Carson's so they might have that cherished smoke together. It had become a duty, almost religious. This had been going on for two years.

Just why these two men should have been flung together in that far away lonely land of level sunlight, and why each should have lured the other into friendship, is perhaps one of those subtle things only to be explained by an analyst understanding human differences and the caprices of the unlike. But the condition existed, a firm, iron-bound devotion, entirely masculine. They were together whenever their work permitted play, no matter how painfully

bright was the sun's veil hanging low down about Carson's place, or how long the ride in from the range. Sometimes they went to a dance together, away off to Red Dog, or may be Benson's. There, one night, they met the girl.

Billy had been in the country much longer than Frank Lovell; therefore, he had heard of the girl first, had known her first. He rode across the yellow waste on this particular afternoon with the knowledge of these things rioting in his mind.

"Hello, Billy!" greeted Frank languidly as he drew up at the door.

"How!" grunted Billy, smiling grimly.

"Drink something?" when he had dismounted. "What's yours, Billy, old man?" slapping him on the shoulder so that the dust leaped out.

"Same old stuff," mumbled Billy, with a decided lack of interest.

They looked into each other's eyes over the rims of the glasses.

"It's dog-goned good to see you again," said Lovell heartily.

"Let's go outside," suggested Billy.

On the right of the house was a wide porch, and there, usually, the two had their silent conference and pipe of peace. They sat down, Billy making ready for his smoke by digging earnestly away at the begrimed bowl of a briar. Lovell rolled a neat cigaret, and tossed over his pouch. There was a silence scented by burning tobacco.

"Been over the way this week?" queried Billy at length, puffing.

"Why—yes," replied the other.

"See Anita?"

"Why, yes," again responded Lovell.

"Say anything to her?"

"Say any—Look ahere, Billy, what'che drivin' at?"

Billy considered a little, pecking at the pipe with his fingers and staring off to where the red discus of the sun was boring a hole in the saffron cloudland. He bit nervously at the pipe-stem, and as nervously blurted out:

"Thought you might have asked her—"

"Pshaw—No!" exclaimed Lovell, reddening, and smiling sheepishly. Then he grew serious and confidential. "Wouldn't have done that without tellin' you, Billy, you know that."

Billy sat again silent, considering. He coughed; twice he almost spoke up, but something seemed to clutch at his throat, and the words were throttled before they were real.

He found courage at last.

"D'ye mean right by that girl, Lovell?"

"Billy!"

The man's face had flushed grandly and the one tense word depicted all his earnest emotion. Billy shrugged his shoulders in a sort of apology, and said, in slow explanation, watching the sun cloud:

"Always thought I knew you, Frank Lovell. A man can't meet up with another, as I met up with you, seein' him, likin' him, without somehow getting to feel that he knows the fellow, eh? Thought I knew you, but wanted to make sure. We're friends, old man, we're friends; and yet, if I had thought you'd—but there, pshaw! dammit! Shake, will ye, Lovell?"

Lovell hesitated.

"Only that we're friends, Billy, we'd been fightin' these past three minutes. An' I want an explanation right now from you. I'll shake with ye, but ye've got to tell me 'bout this thing."

"Sure, lad," said the other, calmly.

"It's this way, right enough. I came to this country afore you, and, well—I was awful lonesome a bit; then—I met the girl. She's a good sort o' girl, ye know. There came a time when I just wanted her bad. I asked the girl, Lovell, but she's a good sort, an' ye know how they are, an' she put me away with a half-teasin' promise. Lots came afore you, lad, lots. I shot a man som'thing awful over to Benson's one night for less than you've done, an' he piked out after they plugged him up. But we've been friends, and—well, since you've come here to settle she's acted queer—downright queer, Lovell. I don't think in the draw I've better'd my hand a card. An' so I thought I'd speak to you straight; there ye are. No harm, eh?"

"No harm—No harm," repeated Frank Lovell, crumbling his cigaret between his

fingers, and swearing softly when it burned him.

"Billy, ol' man," he said, swallowing hard, "Billy! but I'm sorry—"

"No call for that," said Billy evenly. "While there's a woman—there'll be two men, an' disappointment. What d'ye say, eh? D'ye want her—Bad?"

Lovell straightened up, and said plainly, clearly, as a man should:

"Yes, Billy."

The older one considered a moment more; he sighed as if the question had been a weighty morsel which had grown no lighter.

"There's no friendship with a woman playin' in, old man," he continued. "Love's a cutthroat game. D'ye see that little shiny bit o' stuff out there in the sand? If I hit it, can I have first chance?"

"Billy," exclaimed Lovell with a generous smile, "you're the best shot in these parts."

"Tie me, then," said Billy, honestly.

Lovell nodded, a frown coming to his face. This was scarcely an even game, he thought.

A second later Billy fired.

"Missed!" he said petulantly, with a short, nervous laugh.

"Missed," growled Lovell, after his shot.

It was a tantalizing bit of bright stuff, like the gleam of a woman's eye. The third report brought the boys out into the open with a rush. They crowded around the two men, questioning, their faces eager with suppressed excitement.

"What's the row?" asked Pete Thompson, handling himself loosely.

There was a fourth report, and a little dissolving puff of smoke.

"Oh! nothin'," remarked Billy, quietly, shoving his gun back onto his hip. "Lovell's hit it. We were playin' a game."

The crowd melted away into the rooms again, leaving the two men alone. They sat for something like five minutes without speaking, Lovell now and then casting a sidelong glance at his companion to see how he took it.

"S'pose you ride over there afore night, lad," said Billy, speaking up first, a little quaver in his voice which he skillfully changed into a rasping coughing, blaming



DRAWN BY GAYLE PORTER HOSKINS

Once a week Billy would ride over to "Carson's"

the smoke. "See how the land lays. You might come back an' tell me if there's to be a new deal. I'll lay around, waitin'. You could get back by eleven, ye know."

Lovell nodded, and silently began making another cigaret.

"Guess I'll be getting along, then," he suggested, a short time after, rising from the boards.

Billy went with him a little way, their horses close together, their knees touching in the friendly manner of talking men. Then Billy pulled his horse about and said gravely:

"Course, Lovell, when a man plays a game he ought to know it. When the money's up and the draw is made, that aint the time to be a welcher. Bluff goes down when it's good bluff. If I hadn't missed that little shiner, I'd have been first an' we'll just say, s'posin' I had been first. Well—an' that she'd sorter, ye know, sorter liked me the best, why, I'd have gone through with it—"

A frown came to Lovell's face.

"What d'ye mean, Billy," he interrupted. "Are you keeping back anything?"

"Nothin'—only, there aint so many women in this country, an' sometimes a man lets a young and pretty face run away with him—for a time."

"By Heavens! Billy! d'ye mean that I'd—"

"No—only I couldn't help thinkin' how lonesome I was, often. After awhile there'll be other women comin' out, an—well, ye see, lad, when a feller's like that, lonesome, he'll ride many a mile to see the only girl in four townships. An' he won't be particular 'bout her folks, nor her father's folks, nor her mother's folks, nor, nor—anything else, catch on? That's when he's lonesome, an' when he wants someone bad, an' he don't want a man. But, lad, it takes a sight of big, strong, iron-hearted love in a man's heart to carry him riding with a woman all the rest o' life. Many's the rough places, an' the terrible things which won't no way be explained. An' that's what I meant, Lovell, old man. An' say, you might ride fast if you've won straight out from me, an' whistle joyful, understand?"

Lovell gripped his hand. "We'll have a drink when it's over, Billy, eh—"

"It'll be a Dutchman's two fingers, all right, Gawd bless ye!" said Billy. He was off in a little scatter of dust. Lovell looked after him, a smile of happiness on his face.

"An' Gawd bless you," he whispered.

When Billy got back to Carson's there was a long wait before him. He slouched around, moping, for sometime, and then bantered Big Charlie Hudson into a game. They were of a kind—great, silent men. Charlie smoked and spat and played. They first found out who could produce the financial value of the liquids, and then they proceeded to learn who would spend the next month's pay. The whole of the long afternoon passed in this idle fashion, the pile of chips before Billy sometimes high and sometimes low, as the cards were good or bad.

Suddenly Big Charlie glanced up and asked:

"Where's Lovell?"

"Gone over to town on business," answered Billy, pensively.

"Business? For himself?" persisted Charlie.

"For me," replied Billy, leading the queen.

"Comin' back?" continued Charlie, good humoredly.

"Hope so, anyway," commented Billy, counting out four from his stack and shoving them across.

"Good fellow, that Lovell," assured Big Charlie Hudson, ruffling the cards.

"Good fellow, sure enough," answered Billy.

"It's your deal."

The play went on until near sunset. Now the big red ball had gotten into an affray with a huge division of amethyst clouds far over near the plain's edge. These were shortly reinforced by a host, purple clad, which fairly smothered the once arrogant god of the day and took him captive. Out of the purple came a smudge of sepia, like an advance guard of conquerors, heralding the approach of night. Pete came in to light the lamps. He paused, a lighted match in his fingers, and looked out through the open window.

"Someone's comin'," he said casually.

Billy jumped to his feet, mildly excited.



DRAWN BY GAYLE PORTER HOSKINS

About the fellow there was an atmosphere of plenty

"Not Lovell, is it?"

He stood open-mouthed, staring.

"Nope!" said Pete, after another look into the dun twilight. "It's some strange chap—it's that mean cuss, Lopez. Hope he don't tarry 'bout here long. Make me hot all over just to see an' hear him."

Pete went on lighting the oil lamps.

With a jingle of spurs at the doorway the man came in with the stride of a bravado, and surveyed the room. Big Charlie had faded away, and Pete faced the fellow, coolly:

"Hello!" said Pete.

The man waved his hand gracefully, with a patronizing air. He was a tall, sallow-faced fellow, his hair long and black, his eyes having a darkling flash which was interesting but not pretty. Billy noticed, as he waved his hand, that the fingers of it were well supplied with jeweled rings. About the fellow was an atmosphere of plenty, the glint of metal pins as he turned, and the vulgar ostentation of a golden chain around his neck. Billy did not like these things on a man, and immediately the spark of his dislike blazed. He noted, also, that the man carried a heavy gun and was dusty from a long ride.

"Have something?" asked the man, turning on Billy.

The invitation and its tone precluded its acceptance.

Pete filled the little glasses.

The man raised his, looking over it, and said:

"Here's to our sweethearts."

Billy started, coughed, flushed. He did not like the fellow now at all; he hated his smooth half-insolent air and his conceited smile. When the rings on his fingers sparkled, the light hurt Billy's eyes and he turned away. The fellow slouched over to the table, swung his leg over one corner of it, and lolled there that he might talk to and observe his companion. Billy rattled his chair nearer the window. A pale slice of moon was beginning to peep out from a cloud-frilled sky.

"How are the girls about here?" asked the man.

Billy twitched, and his fingers ached to clutch the fellow's throat. Why did this oily devil come bothering him at this time, flinging the insolence of his gold chains and his dirty, greaser pride before him?

Billy stood at the door of Crisis.

He had lived in this solitary country, most five years now, with only the dust and the sun and the never-ending work, making of him a tired, grave-faced something, without joy, without pleasure, without anything uplifting save a thought at odd times of a better, sweeter life. He longed for this. A fierce desire had planted itself in Billy's heart. The thing had spread and spread and spread, until it seemed to-night, when he was waiting for the great vague curtain to lift upon his dream, as if the desire enmeshed him in a terrible, incurable disease. And to add a feeling of inexpressible disgust came this bejeweled, coarsened fellow, to talk idly of girls and to besmirch the beloved name of "sweet-heart!"

Billy hated him.

Once he had seen this same man dicing and drinking when he was at Lone Hill, and Billy had never forgotten the totally evil face of him. Billy tried to forget the same man was present, but this picture would not down. There was the noise-some sensation inspired by a viper, and

Billy's hand scarcely felt at ease until it rested near enough his hip to make that lightning-play for which Billy was noted in five towns and over a wide expanse of cow-country, destitute at most times of law.

Then Billy found himself making a rapid comparison between this puppet of brass and ornamentation and the big, great-hearted fellow who had ridden away from him that evening, glad of a splendid opportunity, and yet ready to play life's greatest game fairly. Billy glanced up at this arrogant depravity sitting upon the table's edge, a thing of malicious intent, known to be a cheat, a knave of the borders, an atom of the dregs, emanating iniquity and pollution. The two thoughts would not blend. Billy regarded this character in a perfectly apparent disgust, not fully understanding himself why he was so moved. If the fellow would only go on his way; if Lovell would only return, thought Billy, growing very unsettled and irritated. He got up from his chair and slouched around, adopting his long, disgruntled stride. The expression upon his face was not inspiring.

Lopez shrugged his shoulders.

"You are not entertaining to-night, *señor*," he said.

"No," growled Billy, savagely, "an' I don't want to be entertained."

A little sneering something curled the corners of the man's mouth, and this in some men would have been termed a smile, but in this instance it only revealed, too plainly, the perversion of the individual. He repeated in a smoothly insistent way:

"How are the girls here, *señor*. I am thinking of staying in this country for a little while—"

Billy wheeled on him instantly.

"Gawd didn't make women for this country," he said sternly.

"No!"

An expression of mild surprise.

"No!"

A low ominous growl.

A blasphemy.

Billy shuddered at the holy name and wondered why the lips forming it did not writhe. What a brief demarcation between prayer and blasphemy. The man began to speak, as if to himself, yet knowing



DRAWN BY GAYLE PORTER HOSKINS

He saw a vapor in which stood a man

his words held the irritated attention of his audience.

"There was a girl I saw over near Benson's, this afternoon—a pretty little jade. Used to live at Faraway's, where her father tricked men at cards, sometimes worse. Her mother was—"

Billy interrupted with a vicious sort of snarl.

Reaching across the table he plucked at the man's sleeve, ripping a piece of braided decoration.

"Here, you!" he said, all the dormant ugliness of him now showing, "you've had your palaver. Quit about that girl right short."

"*Carramba!*"

The other spun around, hot blood manning his sallow face. There was a fiery light in the glittering eyes; a wealth of vile maledictions crowded up to the man's lips, flooding out his whole vitiated past.

"So, you—" his thin lips twisted at the words, barbing them, "you, too, have seen that girl, eh? And you don't like the mention of her family pride, eh? Well, let me tell you all I know, *señor*, concerning her choice extraction. No one knows better than myself, for I played with the father—"

"Hold up there, you dog—" gritted Billy, his face bitter as hate.

"Dog!"

Pete darkened the window. He had been loitering outside and had not heard all this.

"Someone's coming, Billy," he announced for the second time.

Then his eye caught all the action of the scene, the two figures animated by a vicious hatred, poised, reflecting a quarrel and worse.

Pete gasped and hesitated at the window momentarily. He could hear the swift approach of a horse. There came a shrill whistle of delight.

Billy heard, too. Pete saw a shade of supreme sorrow make his features mild. Momentarily the quarrel had been forgotten, as Billy listened. Then Pete heard a

taunting promise flung into Billy's saddened face.

"Let me tell you, *señor*,"—

The horse was very near now, its hoofbeats clattering the gravel. A rich voice cried out, having in it something of tenderness and regret.

"Billy, ol' man—"

"Let me tell you, *señor*," mocked the other.

"No!" passionately came the answer, violent and threatening.

"All the others are dead, but you—you must hear it from me. Not even the girl knows that her people were—"

Billy's thoughts had become painfully torn between the approach of the horseman and the story's possible revelation. Instantly, as with a spasm of the brain, he summed up all things concerning these. The man and his joyous whistle, the effect of the story, even his own self-sacrificing knowledge of that something which he must ever shield from the great-hearted fellow. He did not want to know the stuff himself. Lies, no doubt, dirty lies from an evil source.

There came the sound of a horse's scraping halt, and the whistling of a song—a love song.

"You must know, *señor*, once there lived—" mocked the thin lips.

Billy saw them writhing as a pair of tiny adders. And Pete saw a sudden, terrible movement; he knew and fell asprawl beneath the window. He heard a voice ring out in savage execration, to be followed by a crash—muffled, bursting, in the narrow confines of the room. A fine wisp of smoke drifted out of the window, dirty and grayish, like an unclean soul.

The man who had ridden up to the door, pushed it in. He saw a vapor in which stood a man, gun in hand, poised, intent, watching a motionless heap of gaily decorated rags on the floor.

"Billy—" said the man sympathetically.

Billy drew himself up with a shiver and gasped out:

"I didn't—I didn't miss that time, Lovell," he said.

For the Honor of the Service

BY ROSELLE M. DAVIS

Author of "A Gilt-Cap Cord," etc.

FROM Tarlac to San Fernando is an heroic day's ride on a good horse, but it can be done between dawn and dusk if you spare not your mount. And San Fernando, at the end of your journey, boasts now a hotel with accommodations for man and beast.

Time was when you came to San Fernando only from the south, walking up from Santo Tomas, where the railway bridge was out. You kept close to the main party and went cleared for action. In those days, if your own command were not stationed in the town, you reported to division headquarters and a busy A.A.A.G. assigned you for rations and quarters to the first organization he happened to think of. And you were fed like a homeless dog and allowed to make your bed where you could or you were welcomed as a brother-in-arms, according to the nature and disposition of your officially designated hosts.

Be it said that, with a very few notable exceptions, this last was the rule, applied alike to soldier and civilian. As witness the case of a certain correspondent of more or less note, who ate of the colonel's bread and stood his horse to the colonel's forage for weeks on end. He paid for this hospitality, by the way, by proving that the pen is mightier than the sword. He wrote a pair of stars off the shoulders that earned them onto the shoulders of his host, where they gleam even unto this day. But this be his tory and with that I have nothing to do.

I came to San Fernando in the twilight, riding from Tarlac, and after arranging at the hotel for self and mount I strolled out upon the street, which is the same street, yet not the same, which ran past the Silver church and down to the bridge in other days. Then: a row of desolate, smoke-blackened shells, given over to the bats and lizards, fronting the plaza of the Church, whose ruined *façade* spoke in mute protest against the destruction wrought by those who should have been the last to touch its sacred walls in aught save reverence. Now: a street alive with busy tradespeople, its shops alight and filled with the

merchandise of a prosperous eastern town. Over in the *plaza* a band was lilting a dreamy waltz. The crouds showed a plentiful sprinkling of Americans, soldier and civilian, men and women—real live American women, visions of earthly Paradise to a wanderer from the waste places.

Out of pure joy of living and being again in San Fernando I bought cigarets and a great bouquet of coral hibiscus from a little native girl and later, a cone of sticky native sweetmeats which I brazenly proffered a three-year-old miss sedately promenading by the side of a beautiful American mamma who smiled graciously because, in the fullness of her understanding, she knew her baby's face was a benediction.

Then, as the pair passed on, I felt my collar tighten in a clutch of steel, and I was pivoted about to find the gray eyes of McCabe twinkling into mine, and a voice I would go a hundred miles to hear again to-day, saying:

"*Hoi, compañero!* Thought you was in the States? Heard so, at least. What's the good word and all the rest?"

I explained that I was far from being in the States or likely to be for some time.

"I see," he said dryly. "See you making up to the major's little Sunshine. If that kid don't grow up into the worst-spoiled, most imperious miss that ever trampled men into dust it won't be the fault of the garrison. And her mother: them two is the real commander of this post, though they very kindly allow the colonel to think he is."

"Tag," said I. "You're it. What's the answer?" I had never heard McCabe grow enthusiastic over the sex before. He is preëminently the rather taciturn First Sergeant of C company, top-notch scout, and one of the notable shots of his regiment. Also standing candidate for sergeant-major when Huston dies or retires. This was a new phase and it aroused my curiosity.

"Come," I said. "An officer's lady and popular with the ranks? How do you diagram it?"

"You know," he replied, "how an officer's lady generally treats an enlisted

man. Well, the major's wife, she's different. If he's clean and sober, the commonest private on the station gets his bow and smile just the same as if he had the straps. That means a whole lot to men like us. And the kid! Knows every man in the battalion by name and there aint one of 'em that wouldn't go right down into the Pit to keep her from harm, besides tryin' their everlasting best to ruin her tummy with that same rubbish you was giving her. Of course, though, her ma has good reasons to know that it takes something more than shoulder-straps to make a gentleman, and that every 'listed man aint a hoodlum."

"How is that?" I inquired.

"Nothing," said he. "At least, nothing I'm free to tell. There's things one can't tell out o' school."

I took him by the arm and steered him across the *plaza* and out upon the middle of the old stone bridge. "Here," I said, "we camp until you decide to talk. And remember, it's only two hours till Taps."

McCabe grinned in the dusk while he searched himself and produced from somewhere a 'dobe cigaret.

The major's wife was new to the army and most desperate new to the Philippines when she came out here—all the way from Virginia—to marry Old Oak-leaves. Just a wholesome, sunshiny bit of impudence but dead stuck on the major. You could see a mile off that she'd been used to doing as she good-and-well pleased, and she'd 'a' gone wild at the thought of being ordered.

Now there wasn't a speck of anything bad about her. She was heedless and out for a good time, and it must 'a' been her training that made her so bally indifferent to the results of her capers. Major was provost-marshal and a busy man, and so she'd go out riding or walking or to some afternoon blow-out with any of the young officers that was off duty. Our own lieutenants were all men—real men, and the major's wife went when and where she pleased and had the escort of any officer that was free to go along. Which was all right and proper.

Then, for some reason, or other they assigned us a staff-lieutenant named Brooks; one of these shavetails that aint worth two whoops in the service or out.

Just out of the Point and felt a grade above the division commander; little cat-fur of a mustache that he was always tryin' to twist up into spikes like the pictures of Kaiser Bill; no honor and no respect for himself or anybody else. Set up for a lady-killer, you know; thought all he had to do was look at a woman and she'd say, "I'm yours." Oh, you know the breed.

A staff-lieutenant at a detached post aint just overburdened with duties at no time, and Brooks took a look 'round and cottoned to the major's wife as being the best looker on the station and a good deal the most fun. But he couldn't be content, like the others, to take his rides and dances and let it go at that. Wasn't his style. What he wants is to pick her all for himself.

I know that if she'd ever guessed the kind of man he was she'd 'a' cut him off her list quicker'n breathing; but she was too ignorant of men—and a bit too careless. I was a duty-sergeant then and detailed in the major's office, so I was right where I got to see most of what went on. Brooks, having the most time, wasn't long beating the other young straps out of their turns, and then it was him for all the rides and such—and sticking by her like her own shadow whenever she was out of the house.

The canteen-sergeant told me one time that in the officers' bar, one night, somebody started joking Brooks about his stand-in, and the whelp got chesty and commenced to hint that if he would he could tell 'em more than they ever dreamed of. Timson, second Loo of F company, he was going to make a cleanin' right there, but the rest persuaded him to let it go; but never an officer of our regiment would ever drink with him again, nor speak to him except as in the way of duty. And Brooks laid it to their being jealous of him.

Now, Officers' Row can't pass the lemon to a man without the women finding it out; and knowing that Brooks was about the whole thing around the major's wife, the women got it under their hair that there was more behind the men's action than the captains were willing to tell their wives. Women is by nature suspicious, and the captains' wives had a little sore spot of their own because the major's wife had precedence over them, and they considered her nothing but a fool girl. And on top of

all that, old Missus Grundy lives right up on Officers' Row, and she's always at home.

Some one of the officers' ladies commenced to whisper behind her hand, and that'll beat any woman on earth. It sure nailed the major's wife. Why, you could just see the frost begin to collect when she come into a crowd of them women. First off, she took it that they were sore because she could carry off the young officers, and she laughed like she thought it was funny.

But them women wasn't long showing her to the side-lines, and when it dawned on her, say, but it went home! Clean to the hilt. She straightened her back and tried to make no sign, but you could see it in her eyes. She thought to show 'em she didn't care, and laid out to make 'em feel worse by going on with Brooks more than ever. Took to flirting a little bit when she knew any of the women were watching her, and that was all the time.

Brooks couldn't help seeing what a deuce of a deal he'd fixed for her—it was the talk of every mess in the town—and anybody half a man would 'a' given up his sword-arm but he'd 've stopped it. But Brooks? Not him. When she began to act up trying to hurt the other women, he thought he'd got things comin' his way, and he raised the stakes and played higher 'n ever. Gad! I could 'a' killed him.

They'd come back from a ride, maybe, him leaning over his saddlebow, talkin' sweet and her, busting to bawl, I'll bet, but carrying it off because she knowed that every woman in the station was just behind the window-screens, rubbering. Once when they came back I was standing in the arch. Major had his office on the ground floor of his house and his living-quarters up. One of them big stone *cases* with arched front door big enough to let a carriage drive right through—Stands just beyond the church, there. Well, when they comes up that day, she stretched out her hand and says, "Sergeant;" but Brooks tumbled out of his saddle and run clean around both horses, elbowed me back, and put up his hands to help her down. As he lifted her to the ground he came just as near hugging her as a man dast. I had hard work, right there, to remember he was an officer and me an enlisted man. My hands just itched for a grip on his throat.

She flushed with anger and ran upstairs without a word, and Brooks mounted and rode off swinging in his seat, humming some insolent tune. I wanted to kill him, and I wanted to tell the major, but—well, you can just about guess what 'd happen for a man to go to an officer with anything like I had to tell. And for the first time I cussed the major's wife for the fool she was.

I've wondered what the man meant by letting her go on as she did and I've figured out two reasons. Maybe you can pick out which is right. I have never been married, but I'm told that a woman's husband is the last person in the world to get wise to what she is doing. So the first answer I finds is that he didn't know how matters stood. The other is, that he felt he could trust her anywhere and didn't want to be posing as no green-eyed monster. He was considerable older than she, which made it seem strange that they ever got married. Still, I guess she has always been in love with her husband; she is now, anyway.

There was them that said Oakleaves did object, but that that was all the good it done; but I was in position to know as much about that as them that was talking and I don't believe it. There's always some—women and men—that stand ready to tear a woman's reputation to pieces and feed it to the street dogs.

Brooks 'd send 'round little gifts from Manila—'Mericano candy and the like—and he'd call at the house, stoppin' for a word with the major in the office and then up to pay his respects to the wife. But in spite of everything, I'll swear she'd 'a' sent him going only that she was afraid the others might think she was backing-down.

The thing came to a head at the Christmas ball at the post-commander's. Major took me along as his orderly. Brooks danced with her that night oftener than all the rest together. The other women was so sore that the officers that wanted to keep out of trouble, 'specially the married ones, didn't bother 'round her no great shakes. And that gave Brooks all the better show, and he worked it for all it was worth. He wound up by dragging her off to the veranda and settin' out two dances together. Now, Brooks was to blame, but she sure did deserve a spanking. She could tell by then, that instead of bringing the other women

down it was making them more savage all the time.

Next day our old colonel's wife comes over to call on the Mrs. Major. Colonel's wife is as grand, good a woman as colonel is man. She is old enough to have got over all her foolishness, and she's got a heart as big as a packed knapsack.

She called, as I say, on the major's wife next day after the ball, and she must 'a' talked to that girl like a mother, for when she left the major's wife come half-way down stairs with her and flung her arms around the old lady's neck; and she'd been crying, too. Colonel's wife patted her on the head and said, "There, there, my dear. It'll be all right now. I knew you were young and only needed a word. Yes; it'll be all right, now."

So then the major's wife set out to let the Brooks man down. She tried to do it easy, so as to cause no talk, and it would 'a' went with anybody but him. But, bein' Brooks, it only made him more pernicious than ever. He'd come up, say, and ask her to go riding, some afternoon. She'd turn him down, and then she'd come down to the office and make the major lay aside his work and go out riding with her. She tried every which way to set Brooks back without coming right out in public and slapping him, and in the face of everything he kept bothering 'round.

The colonel's wife was keepin' a regimental eye on matters, for it had got about in the other regiments and was cutting our officers to the bone. The Brooks man, being staff, didn't have no regiment to feel for, and no honor to make him feel for it if he had 'a' had.

One day, after he'd caught the major's wife out riding alone and chivvied her home as usual, colonel sent his orderly down to provost-headquarters with orders for me to report to headquarters at once—"compliments to Major Burbank," of course, "and could he spare McCabe for 'bout an hour?" Major told me to go along and I went back with the orderly.

At headquarters the adjutant says for me to go into the colonel's private sitting-room, and there I found the colonel and his wife.

"Sergeant," says His Eagles, "I've sent for you on a matter of some delicacy, and

while I know it is needless, yet I must tell you that you are to keep sacredly secret all that we say here to-day."

"One moment, Horace," puts in the Mrs. "Sit down, sergeant. I'm sure we'll all feel more at ease. There; that's better."

Colonel nodded his old head and went on: "I've not forgotten, sergeant, that other occasion when you helped me not a little in a pretty ticklish case"—he was speakin' of the shooting of Ramon the Ladrone, which his wife didn't know about—"and now, that I have decided upon another matter, one involving the honor of the regiment, to a great extent, I need the help of an enlisted man again and I very naturally thought of you."

I thanked him and he went on: "It's not a pleasant thing to speak of, even among the officers; not meaning that officers are made of any better clay, you understand, but—well, you see what I mean—it's not pleasant to speak of at all. The fact is, sergeant, that the wife of one of our officers is being annoyed and made conspicuous by the attentions of a reptile in uniform, and an officer at that."

"There are plenty of the young lieutenants who would jump at the chance I am going to offer you, but for reasons you will readily see, I can't let them in on this. A disagreement between two officers; one of them the man in question, would undoubtedly be attributed to the very real cause of the trouble; whereas, officially speaking, the enlisted men of the post are not presumed to be familiar with the affairs of the officers' families. Of course, we all know that this is a fable, but it pleases us to keep up the delusion. So that, if what I have in mind proves effective, the officers of the other regiments will look elsewhere than in the right quarter for the reasons behind the event. Do you follow me?"

"As far as you've gone, yes, sir," I said.

The colonel was fiddling with his paper cutter, a little Filipino dagger he'd picked up somewhere. In his excitement he drove the blade an inch deep into the top of the narra-table and it snapped off flush with the wood.

"It's just here, sergeant," he says. "There is a man here—an officer—a staff-officer—whom I want whipped—whipped like the cur he is—whipped within an inch

of his infamous life. And I want it done by an enlisted man because of the fact that he'll feel such a thrashing infinitely more than if he got it from another officer—more so because he can't get the man punished; I'll see to that. And sergeant, I want you to whip him. Will you do it?"

Right there he had me faded. "Colonel, sir," I said, "you have done me the honor to say I am a good soldier. I am. I try to be. And a good soldier cannot raise hand against a superior."

"He's no superior of your's," says the colonel's wife. "No, sir."

"I'm not asking you," says the colonel, "to walk up to him on the parade and knock him down. If you consent to do this for me I intend excusing you from all other duty until you have executed this commission. You will simply camp on his trail, and when the opportunity presents, pick a quarrel and then—pound his head off, and I am only sorry I can't be present when it's done. Now, of course, this is not an order. I am asking it as a favor. You have already put me under lasting obligations to you by reason of that other matter. Will you increase my debt by this?"

I sat there looking at the floor and the colonel's wife says, soft-like, "It does look rather brutal when one considers it more. Horace, don't you think of any other way?"

"It's a dashed sight less brutal than killing him, and that's what he'll get if Major Burbank goes after him," said the colonel, "besides being less notorious for the regiment. How about it, sergeant?"

"I'll do it, sir," I said. "Though I am free to confess I don't relish the idea of striking an officer."

"He won't be an officer long after the striking," said the colonel. "We'll make it the cause of his resignation—or transfer."

So when I left I carried an order to the major detailing me for "special duty" for an indefinite period. The colonel's instructions regarding that special duty was to take a rest, have a good time, and lick that staff-lieutenant.

"Do it as quietly as you can," says the colonel, "for I'm going to have one deuce of a time keeping it away from a summary court, at the very best."

I knocked around several days, got a blouse that didn't have any chevrons on it,

and whipped a cavalryman down back of the artillery lines, to sort o' get my hand in. I made myself acquainted with the hang-outs and habits of the Brooks man, and that took near a week. He had out his horse nearly every day, loafing about on the watch for the major's wife, but she had the major with her every time.

Then word came in that there was a big bunch of insurgents gathering up above Mexico and I went out one day to see what I could see. I figured that if I should miss one chance at Brooks there'd be other chances and the colonel had set no time limit on me.

When I came back from that scout I kept clear of the road 'til I got right up to the stone bridge that stands at the edge of town. I wasn't expecting to see Brooks, and surely not the major's wife, but a fellow scouting gets into the habit of doing away with any advance notices of his whereabouts, and I stepped up onto the bridge without any preliminary noise.

Right in the middle of it the major's wife, with her face in her hands, was trying to get past Brooks, him heading her off and pleading with her to listen to him. It comes to me then that an all-wise Providence had sent me out on that scout and then enticed Brooks out to the bridge and fixed every thing ready for that cleanin'.

I scuffed a heel and Brooks looked up. When he saw me he shut up and walked to the parapet of the bridge and leaned there. I came on, racking my brain for the method to begin. And that came ready-made. I just sauntered past, giving him a stare but making no move to salute. Anybody with horse sense, caught as I'd caught him, would 'a' passed over that matter of saluting in return for the other party saying nothing, but I had sized Brooks up right.

Seeing me pass him that way, he straightened up and snapped.

"Here, sir. Don't you know enough to salute an officer when you see him?"

"Yes, sir," I answered, not saluting.

"Then why don't you salute?"

"Well," I says, "I'm a little particular what I salute."

Say! Maybe you can guess what that'd do to an officer! It was just the same as if I'd struck him. I hated to do it right there before the lady, but I dasset throw away

no such God-sent chance, and besides—he'd just been pestering her. I looked that she'd *vamos* when the trouble started, but she just clasped her hands up before her and stood back against the bridge-rail and never moved 'til it was all over.

"You're under arrest!" he yells. "Give me that rifle!"

I just dropped it against the rail behind me and stood waiting. He came right at me, and it was no trick at all to touch him on the point of the chin. 'Twas nothing to be proud of, for he never supposed I'd hit 'im. But when he got on his feet I see there was going to be a fight. There was; a beaut.

It was no case of turning him across my knee and spanking him. He'd studied boxing at the Point. I never had, but a staff-officer don't take enough exercise; and every time I got in on him I jolted something loose. It was even up for a long five minutes with no rests between rounds, and then I felt him begin to weaken. When I got him so he'd stand I took his neck in one hand and proceeded to whip him for the colonel. All that had gone before was on my own account, you understand. I broke his nose, put a Swiss sunset under each eye, and finished up with a jab on the side of his neck below the ear—what they call the pneumo-gastric nerve, like. When I let go he crumpled up like a damp towel.

As I turned to pick up my rifle the lady says, "Sergeant," and I stood 'tention.

"Sergeant," says she—must 'a' recognized my face—"may I ask you to escort me a way toward town? I—I'm a—some-what unnerved."

So I walked beside her up as far as the warehouse this side the pottery kiln, she holdin' her head high and saying never a word. When we passed that warehouse she says, "I can go on alone, now. Thank you for your attention." Then she asked, suddenly, "That man—back there. Ought he not have some attention? Is he badly hurt, sergeant?"

"I think not, ma'am," I said. "He'll

probably take the full count but he'll be all right when he comes to."

"Oh, thank you," she says, and walked on. I fell away and hurried to quarters. I had one ear that was flapping like a shutter with a broken hinge.

And Brooks, he raked the garrison with a fine toothed comb, but he couldn't be sure of the man that had assaulted him from behind while he was going out to investigate the stories of insurgents that was said to be near San Fernando. I don't see how he accounted for his being started out on such a trip without any arms of any kind. But it made the devil of a stir, and Brooks couldn't stand the racket. He got transferred down to Manila. Said he wouldn't stay in a post where an officer could be assaulted by a private—I burned that uniform that night—and the culprit go scot-free. So he left us and everybody was dashed glad of it. I have heard that he went back to the States and got into the commissariat. That was about his size.

But that tamed the major's wife. She quit being the gay young Mrs. Burbank, yours truly, and out for a good time, and she become the Mrs. Major Burbank and the major was very much in evidence, too. The colonel's wife gave the captains' wives and the rest a quiet tip, and they all fell over themselves being nice to the Mrs. Major. And since Little Sunbeam turned up she stands next to the colonel's wife as the finest woman in the post, and her an' the kid can run the ranch when they please. Oh, she's cured of her foolishness, all right.

Here I asked a question. McCabe slid from his perch on the bridge.

"Oh, you be hanged," he said. "Anyway, there's 'Call to Quarters' and I've a check roll-call to take at taps."

From his captain, next morning, I learned that in the case of McCabe's watch—a fine one, by the way—is engraved a clenched fist surmounting the simple inscription, "For the Honor of the Service." Every officer of the regiment was represented in the list of donors.



DRAWN BY ELEANOR M. HILLMAN

"We was saved by a miracle and my foresight"

Enos Atkins' Atonement

BY HUGH PENDEXTER

Author of "Tiberius Smith," etc.

THE little circle about the hotel's dead fireplace pressed down the tobacco evenly and leaned back in grave content to listen. The fact that Enos Atkins had been telling the same stories for forty years detracted not a whit from the general interest, but rather inclined the audience to thrill with a certain sense of copartnership, as each listener anticipated the climax and evidenced approval by a slight nod or a hearty thumping of fist on knee.

Night after night Landlord Abel Farnum drew out his deep-cushioned chair to await the arrival of his friends. Enos, having no domestic duties to detain, as a rule was one of the first to drop in. Then the smoke would be puffed in silence until the circle was complete. The program was ever the same: first, the stray news-items, followed by a generous sprinkling of criticism and debate, and lastly, Enos in his personal reminiscences of the dark days of '61.

As his custom, he now approached the major event of the evening with a series of admonitory "ahems!" intended to restrain indiscriminate conversation, and prefaced his opening with the often repeated statement, "Yas, fellers, that's how th' battle of Lookout Mountain was fit."

To the uninitiated this observation might seem anomalous, but the loungers took it as a cue and settled into easier postures and paid the last attention to their pipes and waited complacently. The speaker paused for a few seconds and frowned at a poster of last year's county fair and then continued heavily:

"We swept up old Lookout in a drizzlin' rain. Th' lead was cheepin' about us like weepin' devvuls, but we kept on till a bank of rebs broke through th' smoke an' clouds an' lambasted our pantin' heroes like all git-out. 'Remember, we're Hooker's bravest,' I choked; but do what I could ter help th' officers we was drove back."

Then another pause for the general situation to soak in, and after the usual tribute of muttered monosyllables had been paid Enos nodded his head in mute acknowledgment, and with his eyes still directed toward the poster again took up his narrative.

"An' down we was swept ter near th' foot of th' mountain, an' I made up my mind all was lost. Yas, sirree! I tell ye, it all looked blacker'n th' clouds, as we tumbled back, but what d'ye think?"

"Go on, En, go on," urged the landlord softly, as he leaned forward to hungrily catch each word.

"We was saved by a miracle an' my foresight," added Enos solemnly. "Jest as all looked th' darkest we tumbled inter a trench that had been dug by the rebs, an' as we was jammin' each other inter it I had a inspiration, or somethin', an' yelled, 'Be calm, men, an' lay snug.' Th' officers took up th' word, an' danged if th' rebs didn't sweep right over us an' keep on goin', thinkin' we was still ahead of them somewhere in th' fog. That was what I had figgered on their doin', an' like one man th' boys in blue rose up an' walloped it ter them in th' back. They was squelched, ye can safely warrant. An' that's how th' battle of Lookout Mountain was fit an' won."

"I swan! but that's good," cried a calow youth loudly. "How old was ye, Mister Atkins?"

"Jest a shade over fifteen, but big an' likely for my years. Had ter lie about my age before they'd let me enlist," chuckled Enos.

"Now tell us about shootin' that man with a hunk of silver," begged Landlord Farnum, his gaze dwelling on the historian's bearded face in unbounded admiration.

"Wal," demurred Enos slowly, "I don't know as I feel in th' right fettle ter-night ter tell that. It always makes me feel depressed-like an' solemn."

"We know, Enos, but we're simply achin' ter hear it," soothed Mr. Farnum.

"Did ye really kill a man once with a hunk of silver?" inquired a new voice on the edge of the circle.

All turned in mild amaze. For forty

years the story had been enjoyed with no one deeming it necessary to put this query. The speaker was a tall, gaunt stranger, who had obtained his supper at the hotel that afternoon and the promise of a bed for services rendered in the woodshed.

Enos eyed him coldly for a moment, and then ended the scrutiny by knocking the heel from his pipe. As this was his signal for departing the circle scowled in deep displeasure, while the landlord, reaching out a detaining hand, voiced the disapproval of all by dryly informing:

"When Enos Atkins is good enough ter tell a bit of war hist'ry we usually keep shet an' count ourselves mighty lucky ter be allowed ter listen."

"I didn't mean no harm," apologized the offender meekly. "Only, it sounded so queer an' interestin' I couldn't help speakin'. I'm dyin' ter hear it; that is, if th' cap'en is willin'."

Enos was unconsciously mollified by the title, while the thought of having new ears for his best effort was not at all displeasing. Yet appearances demanded that he rise haughtily and without replying begin to fumble with his coat. Only the stranger's repeated assurance that his remarks were purely ejaculatory and forced from him in the intensity of the moment, reinforced by the landlord's pleading, could induce the veteran to resume his chair. Even then his brows did not relax in fixity for several seconds. Finally he yielded a bit, and then as a chorus of beseeching voices assailed him, he repeated the customary "ahem!" and began:

"It was when we was before Petersburg. We'd been hammerin' an' hammerin' th' enemy till we was black in th' face, an' me in th' front trench pumpin' in lead day an' night, till I became a ragin', tearin', blood-thirsty devvul. 'Go as far as ye can,' our colonel use ter say, 'an' about a hundred yards farther on ye'll find En Atkins, if he aint been killed.'"

"Wal, one day, near th' end of th' siege I run out of bullets. Jest as I was goin' ter sneak back for more I see a young chap dodgin' behind a house near-by an' actin' as if he was goin' ter cut an' run. Lawd! how many times I've wished I'd let th' poor devvul go! I'd give my farm ter know now I only wounded him."

"Jumped from behind a house, an' then back again, kind of scared an' wild like?" broke in the stranger breathlessly.

"That's what I said," returned Enos shortly. Then to his old friends, and speaking sadly, "I guess, fellers, he was th' only man I killed durin' th' war that I felt sorry for."

"Go on! Oh, please do go on," urged the stranger eagerly, ignoring the circle of frowns.

Rhetorical effect now demanded that the stranger be recognized, and in facing him Enos displayed considerable amiability as he said, "Wal, I hate ter. It's a black spot in my life. Ye see, it wa'n't necessary for me ter snuff out that young life. He was jest tryin' ter git away. But feelin' sorry don't help none. What I did was ter yank out a hunk of silver that one of th' Nevada boys had give me for a keep-sake an' twist it inter a cartridge. Then—"

"Then ye shot him as he tried ter run, hittin' him, as near as ye can figger, in th' neck, or mebbe, th' right shoulder," completed the stranger excitedly.

Enos lowered his pipe in a mixture of astonishment and anger. Then the first emotion slowly obliterated his resentment and he became dully conscious of a tinge of content as he realized the unexpected endorsement was affecting the circle mightily, and he mildly observed, "I guess ye've heard of this before, mister."

"Heard of it!" cried the other exultantly; "I should say I had. An' ter think I should be th' means of bringin' th' good news ter ye."

"What news?" gasped Enos weakly, bending low over his knees to search the stranger's face.

"That th' young man was not killed by th' bullet," returned the stranger triumphantly.

"Not killed!" muttered the veteran dully.

"By Judas!" ejaculated Mr. Farnum; and then relapsing into wide-eyed silence.

"For forty years we've understood that feller was killed," protested the man nearest the fireplace in a stupid monotone.

"Th' only man shot with a silver bullet in front of Petersburg was not killed," repeated the stranger firmly. "Th' bullet was shaped like a thimble, wa'n't it; with a cross scratched on its base?"

"Y-a-s, I guess so," choked Enos nervously, stealing a puzzled glance at the animated face of his questioner.

"Wal, that man lived for some time afterwards an' carried th' bullet in his pocket as a reminder of them grim days," declared the stranger dramatically.

"Bu: he died after all, eh?" remarked Enos in a more sprightly voice, his face clearing. "Wal, I'm sorry th' poor cuss is dead. I only wish I could have had a chance ter show him I regretted that deed."

And his fingers were composed as he resumed filling his pipe.

"Th' best news is yet ter come," informed the stranger gently. Then half-rising and impulsively stretching out his arms toward the veteran, while his voice was husky with unshed tears, he murmured, "Don't ye know me?"

Landlord Farnum pushed back his chair with a crash, while the others as noisily gained their feet, leaving the dazed narrator with sagging jaw to face the prolonged invitation of the lean arms.

"Know ye? Of course I don't," he mumbled, mopping his glistening forehead.

"I'm William James Freeman, once a Southern soldier," explained the stranger humbly and bowing his head.

"All news ter me," gasped Enos, working his chair to the wall.

"Th' name, yes; but not th' man, when I say I'm that boy ye shot down in th' outskirts of Petersburg."

And with this proclaimed in a loud, glad voice, Mr. Freeman hurled himself upon the crouching historian and embraced him hungrily.

"Ter think," he cried, turning to the astounded group, but with his disheveled head still in loving proximity to the imprisoned and distorted face of the veteran, "that I should come here, weak an' lonely expectin' nothing, an' findin' you."

"Great General Scott!" stuttered Landlord Farnum, finally recovering his voice; "after forty years th' man that Enos shot has turned up, fellers!"

"Yas, he's come an' found a friend in th' man who nearly killed him," affirmed Mr. Freeman with a catch in his voice.

"I a-say, fellers; there must be some mistake. Th' man I—I shot wa'n't so tall

by half a head," protested Enos brokenly, now freeing himself and glaring wildly about the staring circle.

"He's grow'd since then, En," suggested one in loud encouragement.

"An' ter think I should live ter see this day," murmured the landlord dreamily.

"I'm goin' ter send for that bullet," continued Mr. Freeman joyously. "Oh, how glad I be I saved at least that from th' ruin that swept everything else an' left me with nothin'. An' we'll sit down of a evenin', dear friend, an' talk over old times. Yas, I wore th' gray. I was only a boy, mind ye; but we are brothers now."

"Brothers, never ter part," almost sobbed Mr. Farnum.

"I say, fellers," spluttered Enos, staggering to his feet and plucking nervously at his beard, "he don't talk like a Southerner. I—I expected a Southerner."

"I went south when very young," explained Mr. Freeman, smiling tenderly and retaining his affectionate clasp on the other's arm; "but I come north right after th' war. I'm glad ter-night there aint no North or South an' that we are simply brothers."

Enos leaned against the wall, searched the circle, face by face, and opened and closed his mouth spasmodically for the fraction of a minute before he could form the words, then he blurted desperately, "Wal, I'm goin' home."

"Home!" echoed Mr. Farnum in mild ecstasy, turning to wring the stranger's hand. "How sweet th' word must sound ter ye, mister."

Mr. Freeman gently brushed him aside,

and with hands limply folded stood gazing intently at Enos who was shuffling backwards toward the door. He said nothing, but simply focused his eyes in a meek and hurt inquiry on the old veteran's perturbed face, and the loungers, struck by the same thought, became quiet and added their questioning stare as the distance to the threshold was slowly lessened. Would he speak? Soon it would be too late. Then Enos paused, brought to a halt by the impact of the unspoken chiding.

"Wal," he grumbled doggedly, "ye've all heard Enos Atkins say a sartain man was welcome ter a home—if he needed it. Be ye comin', Mister Freeman?"

"Iknew it! Iknew it!" cried the stranger exultantly. "No empty words could be spoke by that man, I told myself th' minute I sot eyes on his kindly face. Yas, I'm comin', dear friend, an' may we never, never be parted."

The loungers, led by the landlord, drew a deep breath of relief as the situation

was thus saved, and one voiced the sentiments of all, when he declared, "Better'n a story-book, better'n poetry. I knew En always meant every word of it."

Beginning with that night, creaking farm-wagon and dusty foot-passenger industriously spread the news, and the amazing *dénouement* lost nothing in the telling, and furnished a fruitful source of gossip long after the proverbial nine days had elapsed.

After the first effect had worn off a bit and the community found time to take note of the new conditions, two discoveries were made. First, that Mr. Freeman, in en-



DRAWN BY ELEANOR M. HILLMAN

Enos

joying the comforts of Enos' snug bachelor-home, was never detected in any manual labor. Time passed pleasantly for him as he strolled about the neighborhood, extolling his patron's many virtues, or in reading a book on the side-piazza. The second discovery was more important, and caused many of the old veteran's friends a twinge of regret. This was, that his marriage to Lurinda Speerin, spinster, was destined to be long deferred. As Enos had neglected to visit the hotel after the night of the stranger's arrival, and as he never ventured from his premises except in a stealthy manner and evinced an inclination to avoid all his old associates, nothing definite could be learned from him.

Yet the belief grew, when it was observed that he no longer accompanied Miss Speerin to prayer-meeting. As their farms joined, and as they were old neighbors, the prudent-minded had accepted with hearty approval the intimation that the boundary fence would soon be removed. Miss Speerin was his junior by some twenty years and alone in the world. She had given encouragement to the first rumors by smiling archly and observing that a man of Enos' habits and temperament was always young, and had even gone so far as to hint that the two farms would be merged in one before the first snow fell.

Now they seemed estranged.

"I guess th' stranger is th' cause," observed one of th' loungers, after the circle had viewed the vacant chair silently and sadly. "I hate like sin ter see th' match sp'iled, but ye can't expect Lorinda ter go there with Mister Freeman a member of th' fambly."

"An En had been fixin' up his place so's she would have a rippin' good home," reminded another. "But as Edgar says, he must choose between her an' th' man he shot in th' South."

"Wal, unless she agrees ter Mister Freeman's stayin' there, I'll bet th' weddin' don't go," declared the landlord glumly. "Ye see, En is so sot on what he thinks is his duty that he won't change none."

"Mebbe, if Mister Freeman would only do a few chores she wouldn't mind him. But he shies at a hoe like it was pizen. I asked him yesterday why he didn't pitch

in an' work a little, an' he said En wouldn't let him."

"Then I went ter En, an' he kind of groaned an' said he wouldn't listen ter his guest workin'. Huh! called him his 'guest.' Prob'ly he'll leave him th' farm if he dies furst. But it's what I call carryin' duty too far."

Then as minor happenings began to forge to the front and take up the public's attention gossip was given a new impetus by the fish-peddler's avowal he had observed Mr. Freeman deftly aiding the spinster in her flower-garden. It had been assumed that Enos' cloudy countenance was caused by his inability to marry without violating his stern sense of duty. He had sacrificed himself to a principle, it was known, but the possibility of Lurinda even tolerating the cause of her deferred happiness had never been entertained. And now she was receiving him kindly; nay, often found occasion to be in her front yard, as if inviting his presence. Could it be, asked each amazed neighbor, that Enos believed complete atonement could be made only by stepping aside and allowing the stranger to win the object of his belated passion?

This query seemed to be fully answered when Mr. Freeman, attired neatly, if awkwardly, in his patron's best Sunday-clothes, complacently escorted the blushing and timorous-eyed spinster to church. No longer was there any doubt but that the stranger would soon leave the shelter of the Atkin's home to take up the management of the adjoining property. Landlord Farnum found but one touch of consolation in this conclusion; it might result in his old friend returning to the little circle, where, if the "silver bullet" could never again be rehearsed, the loungers might once more, at least, be regaled with the history of the battle of Lookout Mountain.

This anticipation so incited the landlord to action that he clapped on his hat and hurried away to affirm it by the lips of the delinquent.

As he entered the yard and turned the corner to gain the side porch he was halted by voices, one bitter and the other light with laughter.

"Tut, tut, Enos; remember th' wound what nearly killed me," Mr. Freeman was chiding. "How can ye say ye'd be quit of me? Wal, see here; what'll ye give if I quit for good by ter-morrer? Come, make me a offer."

"I'll—Yas, I'll give thurty dollars," growled Enos.

Mr. Freeman paused, as if weighing the proposition carefully; then he said:

"I'm yer man. Fork it over. I'm kind of tired of dawderin' around here, anyhow."

But as the landlord was softly retracing his steps he heard him laugh uproarously and add, "An' now we've settled that, lemme tell ye some news: Ye won't lose me very far, as I'm goin' ter marry Lurinda."

On the morrow, Miss Speerin herself rendered needless any secrecy on the landlord's part by confusedly confessing to his wife that she had favorably considered Mr. Freeman's advances.

"Ye see," she explained, with a faint touch of pink in her cheeks, "I was vexed at his comin' at first, as Enos an' I had planned on bein' married this fall. We are old neighbors an' I hesitated a long while before I could decide," and she sighed softly; "but Enos helped me make up my mind by keepin' away as if he'd give me up. Then William James came. He's nearer my age an' I am lonely. Then I learned he had been wounded by th' man I use to think I loved."

And she sighed again.

"It seems dretful, an' yet very romantic, to think he was shot in th' war. Only, it seemed horrible that Enos was th' one who shot him. I guess that's what drew me to him. I pitied him, an' th' more I pitied him th' more I got to thinkin' of what a violent man Enos has been."

"He always seemed kindly," protested Mrs. Farnum, her eyes looking troubled.

"But he was never wounded," rejoined Lurinda gravely. "An' he has wounded William James. Jest think of th' difference! William James is all heart an' tenderness an' never hurt nobody. But think of th' folks Enos has killed in th' war—always a—shootin' somebody. Of course, it was his duty, when th' flag was in danger, as he always says; yet it's disturbin'. An' William James has no blood on his hands, except as he was wounded, poor man."

In conjunction with this announcement Mr. Freeman took up his quarters at the hotel as a boarder, pending the arrival of his wedding-day; and Enos, now entirely alone, seemed to shrink more within himself.

He found a slight surcease, in laboring on his farm from early until late, but when the day's work was done and he had lighted his lonely-pipe his thoughts would turn to the approaching nuptials with hateful persistency.

He had decided to sell his farm and lose himself in another community, only he could not bring himself to look for a purchaser until the wedding-ceremony had been performed.

Possibly it hurt him the most to learn, from chance conversations among his neighbors, how implacably she was set against him. She knew him as a man of violence, and after he had passed from out of her life she would always abhor him as such.

This disquieting line of thought gradually led him to a final determination. He would try and carry a more kindly memory with him. At first he did not believe he could make the requisite effort, yet Lurinda's good opinion was everything, the only desirable thing that might accompany him into exile. So he canvassed it by piecemeal and found it all cruelly hard to his old sense of pride. But at last, just as the rays of the afternoon-sun were laying a golden carpet over the dusty road, he conquered self, and jamming his hat over his eyes sought her for the last time in her home.

He found her working among the flowers in the old-fashioned garden, and he had stood with head and shoulders bowed for nearly a minute before she detected his presence.

"Mercy, Enos! how ye startled me! I thought ye was a ghost," she cried. And as she noted the hollow, hopeless look about his eyes her own were touched with sympathy.

"That's jest it," he muttered, stroking his beard slowly, "I'm a ghost. Th' En Atkins ye use ter know, an' who ye threw over for a younger chap, is dead. It's jest a mockery that ye see now."

"I don't know what ye mean," she



DRAWN BY ELEANOR M. HILLMAN

He sank to a seat on a wheelbarrow and covered his face

faltered, falling away from him because of the miserable intensity of his demeanor. "Ye don't mean to find fault with me because of my approachin' weddin', do ye? Why shouldn't I take up with a younger man, a man who is nearer my age, especially when a sense of pity draws me to him. Ye know, ye kept away from me for quite a while before I got to know him at all. It was really all over between us before I ever see him. Perhaps, Enos, ye're feelin' cut up because ye shot him. If that's so, yer feelin's do ye credit."

"An' I had painted th' house an' bought some new furniture," he groaned, looking vacantly over her head, as if apostrophizing a shade, "an' now it's good-by ter thoughts of happiness in that home."

She was bordering dangerously on pity and her slight figure trembled a bit; but clinching her hands, and holding herself loyal to the absent, she spoke as if not heeding him, and said,

"He is so meek an' forgivin'. Never speakin' harsh of th' man who shot him.

Why, every time I think of his sufferin's th' tears come. Ah, Enos, ye can't understand, as ye've always been a man of violence, dotin' on them ye've killed. But a woman would understand an' appreciate why I smile on th' man of kindly feelin's."

"I'd whitewashed th' stones borderin' th' driveway," he continued dully; "an' had bought th' best lot in th' cemetery. But now, all them little arrangements I took so much comfort in makin' is knocked in th' head."

"Who's to blame for it all?" she demanded, now on the verge of tears, tapping the ground with the rake to hold his attention and conceal her emotion. "Who's to blame for my choosin' him? I'll admit I'd come to think it would be yer name I was to take, an' I was willin' until ye neglected me. Then I come to see th' contrast in that poor, wounded man, an' the man always boastin' of his violence. Enos, ye must find yer satisfaction in bein' known as a hero. When ye decided to be a hero, a shootin' bullets an' hunks of silver into

folks, ye said 'Good-by' to woman's love."

And she sighed sadly. For after all, Enos was one of the home-folks, and it came hard, she was finding, to brush him aside, even for the gentle personality of the stranger.

And he, as she said this, seemed to crumple up within himself, as he sank to a seat on a wheelbarrow and buried his face in his hands.

"Don't take on so," she begged, her voice choking.

"I don't blame ye a bit, Lurinda," he moaned. "I don't know what kind of a husband this Southern hero will make; but no matter how he turns out, he aint such a fraud as I be."

"Enos," she cried, "ye mustn't talk like that."

"I can't sleep till I've confessed ter ye," he continued desperately. "I must have ye know all before I quit this neighborhood. I mean—I'm a humbug. Hero? I'm nothin' but a deceitful, braggin' old fool. Oh, it's pesky hard ter confess it, Lurinda; but I've got ter ease my mind. I aint no warrior, nor never was."

"For forty years—" she began timidly.

"I know," he broke in hurriedly, "for forty years I've been yarnin' about th' dead I've corded up down South. I guess I've planted a man for every rod of country down there, accordin' ter my say-so. It's desperate tough ter admit it, but I don't know as I ever hurt a man durin' th' whole war, except by droppin' a camp-kettle on one feller's foot an' came near lamin' him. I—"

"Enos," she whispered, "remember th' silver bullet."

"All rot," he muttered, still hiding his face and speaking so low she was forced to bend over him to catch the words. "All rot. I lied. I'm a fearful sinner. If ever I shot any one it must have been in th' back, as I never faced a firin' line. When I wasn't guardin' th' sutler's wagon I was in th' hospital corps. It's terrible hard ter confess all this, Lurinda; but ye must know me jest as I am before I go."

"Do ye mean ye never shot William James Freeman?" she whispered timidly.

"Never fired so much as a piece of hard-tack at him. Never see him," he replied brokenly. "Most of th' time of th' Petersburg siege I was in th' guard house for stealin' a hen from th' colonel's tent. Can't ye see, Lurinda," and he staggered to his feet and threw out his hands as if to reveal all, "can't ye see I'm th' worst, dod-rotted coward an' humbug as ever come back from war unhurt? I'm tellin' ye this ter punish myself; I'm telling ye so's ye'll pity me, an' not detest me as a slaughterer. I never was a butcher. I'm a poor, old fraud."

She worked her hands, one in the other, convulsively, and stood staring at him intently for the fraction of a minute before her look of incredulity changed to one of amazement. Then her eyes took in a different light and she advanced toward him slowly, saying:

"Enos, do ye mean that all these stories about yer bayonetin' people an' cuttin' an' slashin', is lies?"

"Every danged one," he replied listlessly, turning to stumble down the path.

"An' ye never was a man of violence?" she pursued tremulously.

"Not even ter a rabbit," he assured over his shoulder, now nearly to the gate.

"Enos, come back!" she cried softly.

"To think of th' pity I've wasted on that other lyin' critter! Come back, I say, Enos. To think of ye havin' th' courage to tell me all! Enos, at least, ye are a truthful man."

"Ye can't mean ye've got any use for a old—"

"Not another word about that," she commanded, gently placing one thin hand on his lips. "It'll never be mentioned, except as I say one word to Mister William James Freeman in partin', an' as I say now, ye'd better quit entertainin' Ab Farnum an' his friends. Ye can tell them yer wife objects to yer bein' away from home so much."

"My wife!" he gasped, settling down limply beside her on the step.

"An' now," she continued brightly, patting his rough hand and pretending there were no tears in her eyes, "tell me what color we shall paint th' barn."



Parisian Fashion Model XXV A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Levillon:—Voile costume over a blue foundation trimmed with embroidered ruching edged with blue.



Parisian Fashion Model XXVIA
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Cheruit:—Dinner costume of black mousseline de soie made over
 cream: the corsage is trimmed with gold embroidery.



Parisian Fashion Model XXVII A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Redfern:—Dinner gown of dull pearl satin trimmed with gold embroidery.



Parisian Fashion Model XXVIII A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Drécoll:—Costume of English embroidered muslin, coat of embroidered white voile.



Parisian Fashion Model XXIX A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Drécoll:—Coat of black crêpe de chine made over stamped blue
mousseline de soie.



Parisian Fashion Model XXX A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Redfern—Costume of blue striped silk trimmed with lace



Parisian Fashion Model XXXIA
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Riva:—Costume of white etamine trimmed with narrow bands
of lace.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXII A
FROM LIFE

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Levillon:—Costume of white embroidered muslin trimmed
with lace.



PHOTO BY OTTO SARONY CO.

Jack Barrymore as *Clown*

The Barrymore Children

By

BY LOUIS V. DE FOE



PHOTO BY OTTO SARONY CO.

Lionel Barrymore as *Pantoloon*

FOR many reasons—and of these the development of acting along its proper lines as a creative art is not one—the story of the youthful careers of the talented trio, known to all theatergoers as “the Barrymore children,” is interesting. It illustrates the successful practice of a bad principle that has come into almost universal vogue on the stage in this country and England during the last twenty years, and that will continue to rule until a way is found to free the dramatic profession from the purely commercial system that now restricts it.

It is the story of almost meteoric rise to fame, else it would not be worth telling. It is also the link that connects the substantial achievement of yesterday with the scintillating, frothy, momentary popularity of to-day, else it would not be of greater account than any of the other lucky accidents that are constantly occurring in a profession in which fortunate combinations of circumstances create celebrities overnight.

With the great majority who do not take the trouble to look beneath the surface of what they see on the stage, Ethel Barrymore, possibly excepting the electrical little Maude Adams, is the most suc-



PHOTO BY BURR MCINTOSH STUDIO

Ethel Barrymore as *Sunday*

cessful of all the younger actresses. She is far better known than her brothers, for she has the advantage of sex over them. Her's has been the triumph of that indefinable thing called “personality.” Her cold, finely-chiselled Greek beauty, gentleness, good breeding, natural distinction, and an authority of manner acquired by much experience in the world are stamped on nearly everything she does, but they always seem to be characteristic of her individuality, rather than of the rôles she assumes.

I have seen her in all her parts in this country, and I can recall only two—in “Carrots” produced in 1902, and in “A Doll's House,” revived late in the spring of 1905—in which she impressed me as embodying a type of character distinct from her own. But she did not take the trouble afterwards to develop this trace of a gift of impersonation, or else for business reasons she fell back again upon her purely personal charms. Anyway, from her *Stella de Gex* in “His Excellency The Governor” in 1900, down to her last new rôle this season, in the unsuccessful English comedy “The Silver Box,” she has shown only scant progress as an actress. To be strictly fair, it might be added that she may be less

to blame than her manager, for, with the exceptions of the two plays already named, she has never had much occasion to adjust herself to character. On the contrary, assiduous care has always been observed that her rôles be exactly adjusted to her.

In a profession in which acting is generally a matter of accidental talent and is only rarely a legacy of the blood, the three "Barrymore children" hold a unique position, which insures for them an affectionate regard on the part of all lovers of the theater.

Through their maternal grandmother, Mrs. John Drew, Sr., the present representatives of the Barrymore name inherit the love they hold for the profession of the stage. The venerable and gifted actress, whose brilliant *Lady Teazle* and amusing *Mrs. Malaprop* were the delights of theatergoers for half a century, lived to give Ethel Barrymore her first start in the family's profession. What might not have been the future of her beautiful grandchild had Mrs. Drew lived to direct her career to its fruition? Any rôle that called for blithe and effervescent spirit was within the fine old actress' range. In her remarkable career that, on the American stage alone, encompassed seventy years, she played almost every conceivable part, both masculine and feminine, and in her prime, as proprietor of the famous old Arch Street Theater in Philadelphia, she was one of the guardian influences of the drama on its managerial side.

Of Mrs. Drew's children, two adopted the profession of their parents: the present

John Drew, born in 1853, and Georgiana Drew, born in 1856. The latter became a much beloved actress, inheriting much of her mother's genius for comedy. She acted first in Mrs. Drew's Arch Street Theater in 1872. While a member of Augustin Daly's Stock Company in 1876 she met and married Maurice Barrymore, and

three years later, Ethel Barrymore, the oldest of the triumvirate of children that still survives, was born at her grandmother's home in Philadelphia.

To inherit a family's fame and fortunes sometimes has its disadvantages—if the legatee happens to have an ambition to carve out a career of his own, but it also sometimes has its compensations. The conditions of theatrical life made it impossible for the Barrymores always to have their children with them, and Ethel, until she was fourteen years of age, spent most of her time with her grandmother in Philadelphia. She attended the Convent of Notre Dame and in her childish ram-



PHOTO BY SARONY

Ethel Barrymore

bles learned the ins and outs of the old Arch Street Theater. Then came the time when her inherited instinct for the stage began to assert itself.

Her life, however, was to be exempt from the hardships that have hampered and discouraged the early ambitions of most actresses. It was to be shielded from unanswered applications for work and hours of weary waiting outside of managers' doors, no matter how interesting such experiences might have been for future reflection. When the right opportunity came, Mrs. Drew who, meanwhile, had given up

her interest in the Arch Street Theater, took the granddaughter on a tour of experience through Canada, and here she made her first meek bow to an audience.

Ethel Barrymore, I think, would like to delude herself into believing that she had a hard struggle to gain a foothold on the stage. She even resents that golden capital on which all the women of her profession draw so largely—youth. After her appearance in "Cousin Kate" at the time of the dedication of the Hudson Theater, when New York was indulging in one of its annual paroxysms over her "personality," she said, with a brave show of indignation:

"When will people get tired of calling me a beginner. Why, I have been acting ten years. At fourteen I played with my grandmother in Canada. We slept on trunks. We even had sheriffs after the trunks. That, you know, isn't an unusual experience for barnstormers. And yet, every time I appear they put me down as a beginner and talk about my 'personality.' It is getting really discouraging."

That was nearly five years ago, and Miss Barrymore has not appeared in another character that is an appreciable advance beyond her rôle in "Cousin



PHOTO BY SARONY

Jack Barrymore

Kate." People are still talking about her "personality," and wondering when she will have a part in which she will not be forced to place her chief reliance upon it.

The first glimpse that New York had of the tall, willowy girl, who was afterwards to become one of its favorite actresses, was in 1894 when her uncle, John Drew, gave her a minor rôle—a very minor rôle—in "The Bauble Shop." She merely walked on and off the stage and she did it so clumsily that those who saw her marveled. The next year, in "The Squire of Dames," the furniture seemed to get continually in her way, and her uncle must have been in despair.

But in 1896 she managed to give a fairly good account of herself in "Rosemary" in the humble guise of a maid.

During the following season Miss Barrymore went to London, and soon were heard the first reports of that remarkable social success that has since made her the most envied of all our young actresses who go across the sea. She became a member of Sir Henry Irving's company at the London Lyceum and played a few small parts, among them *Annette* in "The Bells."

The course of training she received during her brief association with Sir Henry was certainly beneficial, for, when Miss Barrymore returned in 1899 and assumed



PHOTO BY HALL

Ethel Barrymore as *Carro's*



PHOTO BY ELMER CHICKERING

Lionel Barrymore

a rôle with Annie Russell in "Catherine," the timid, hesitating manner that had accompanied her maid-parts in her uncle's companies had worn off. She had "found herself," even if she had not learned to act. She had developed physically and grown strikingly beautiful, in fact, she caused so much admiring comment—chiefly among matinée audiences—that when Jessie Millward left the leading rôle of "His Excellency the Governor," Charles Frohman entrusted her with it and sent her on the road to strengthen her histrionic wings.

Nowadays, when a new favorite takes her place in the theatrical firmament, she reaches it at a single bound. How long she remains there is quite another story. The season of 1901-2 in New York, when Charles Frohman was getting ready to produce Clyde Fitch's "Captain Jinks of the

Horse Marines," was bankrupt in entertaining, light plays. Nauseous French farces littered the Broadway stages, and clever actresses were wasting their talents on the gilded characters of Parisian courtesans. The public was growing disgusted and longing for something decent.

This was the condition of affairs when the crisp and clever "Captain Jinks," costumed in the hoops and crinolines of Civil War days, was produced at the Garrick Theater. Miss Barrymore, as its engaging *Madame Trentoni*, with a twinkle in her eye, shot up like a meteor. The part suited her to a nicety. The play itself, was original, breezy, and entertaining. Within the last two months and with Miss Barrymore still in its leading rôle it has caused quite as much amusement on Broadway as it did on the night of its first performance six



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Ethel Barrymore as Alice in "Alice Sit-By-the-Fire"



PHOTO BY HALL

Ethel Barrymore as *Cousin Kate*

years ago. The story hovers around the days of the famous Mapleson grand opera at the old Academy of Music in the early sixties. *Madame Trentoni* is an American girl who has become a famous singer abroad and is about to make her *début* at home.

Three dashing guardsmen of the Horse Marines make a mutual wager that each will be the first to win her affections. Accordingly, they meet her at the ship with flowers and blandishments, only to find themselves suddenly made the custodians of her dogs and parrots. Gallant *Captain Jinks* not only wins the bet but actually loses his own heart. Supreme happiness is knocking at his door when the opera-singer becomes aware of the gamble for her heart and gives him the mitten. How the dashing *Captain* executes a clever flank movement and wins the battle is the *dénouement* of a genuinely refreshing play.

Miss Barrymore certainly played *Mad-*

ame Trentoni with dash and amusing whimsicality. The part made her and enthroned her among the stars in a single night. Then began that amazing and inexplicable popularity that has continued ever since but that has never turned the actress' level business-head. She was photographed and interviewed again and again. Her opinions on every conceivable subject, from tooth-powder to love, were sought and made public. And out of the rout of photographers and press-agents Miss Barrymore emerged as the "typical American girl."

If to be self-reliant and self-supporting, strong under burdens of family sickness and cares; gracious, popular, matter-of-fact, fond of freedom and out-of-door life—and all of these intermingled with gentleness, refinement, and modesty—is typical of the true American girl, then Miss Barrymore is one.

On both sides of the Atlantic social gossips have had a merry time with Miss Barrymore's name—but always in a kindly complimentary way. In London she was taken up by the Duchess of Sutherland and other society notables, and almost immediately she was reported to be the affianced wife of a round dozen of eligible young men. At home many of the most exclusive families have opened their inner circles to her and she has had to endure again the gushing twaddle of engagement and estrangement.

So far as I know, Miss Barrymore has only once run the risk of losing her heart. Two summers ago, in London, she became engaged to young Captain Harry Graham, an officer in the famous Coldstream Guards and a second son of Sir Henry Graham, K. C. B., a peer and an official of the House of Lords. Captain Graham had served at Ottawa on the staff of Lord Minto, governor-general of Canada, and had won no little distinction as the author of a volume of satirical verses called "Misrepresentative Men." How much he was enthralled by the gracious American actress is evident from the dedication "to E. B." on the fly leaf of the volume which is accompanied by the following lines:

One single favor do I crave,
Which is that you regard my pen
As your devoted, humble slave.
Most fortunate shall I be then
Of mortal men.

For what more happiness insures
Than work in service such as yours?

The engagement was announced in London and Ethel Barrymore returned home radiantly happy. But last summer came

rumors that Love's course had not run smoothly. Miss Barrymore did not take her annual trip to London. Captain Graham came to this country post-haste, but he did not see his *fiancée*. Then came stories that the alliance had been broken off, which were afterwards verified by the actress returning to her work. What the trouble was no one knows, for both have sensibly kept silent on the subject.

Year by year, from the day of "Captain Jinks," Miss Barrymore has appeared in new characters. They have invariably been pretty, delicate little dramatic water-colors, but of no actual account, save to display her personality to the best possible advantage and lure an ever eager public to the box-office. Two exceptions, partly in her favor, should be made. In the boy-rôle of *Carrots* in 1903, and as *Nora*, the child-wife in "A Doll's House," which Miss Barrymore produced with neither assistance nor advice in May, 1905, she devel-

oped for the moment a definite entity other than her own, and a strain of genuine pathos. If, in the complex Ibsen play, she was emotionally unequal to the situation when *Nora*, her eyes opened to her frivolous, doll-like life and her husband's mean



PHOTO BY HALL

Ethel Barrymore as *Nora* in Ibsen's
"A Doll's House"

selfishness, suddenly develops into a mature woman and leaves her children and her air-castles for an existence of real substance, she, nevertheless, gave a human, frank, direct, and natural rendering of a scene that even more accomplished actresses have generally failed to make acceptable to audiences. *Nora's* childishness, weakness, and amiably oblique propensities in the early scenes were depicted to the life.

Why has Miss Barrymore not had the stamina to follow up this entering wedge into the really substantial and enduring work of the stage? She has persistently neglected to cultivate the art of elocution. Though she has acquired an authority of manner, she has disregarded grace and repose. She has natural pathos and romantic fervor but she is almost wholly deficient in emotion. Though she has frequently grown indignant at the charge, acting, in the lexicon of the stage which has come to be her textbook, is a personal exhibition quite independent of the fictitious character to be represented. It is a fault which Miss Barrymore shares in common with half of the other popular favorites of the day. But it misses

completely the goal of histrionic art, and it is not only to be regretted but condemned.

An unique event in the careers of the Barrymores, and one that will not quickly be forgotten by those who were present,

occurred on Christmas night, 1905, when Ethel, Lionel, and Jack appeared together for the first time in New York in J. M. Barrie's two plays, "Alice Sit-By-The-

Fire," and "Pantaloen." The Criterion Theater was crowded with former friends of their father and mother and there were present, besides, not a few who could recall the gifted Mrs. John Drew in her prime. Long were the plaudits and loud the praise that the interesting trio received that night.

In the larger play, Ethel impersonated *Mrs. Grey*, the mother of two children, the older of which seemed quite as old as she, for again she did not conceal the personal side of her performance. Jack Barrymore acted a suave and much experienced man of the gay world. The story was a clever satire on the modern problem-play, aimed to expose the inconsistency and harmful effect upon immature minds of such profound "works." "Pantaloen" was a pathetic little one-act play evolved from the traditional English *Pantaloen*, acted by Lionel Barrymore, while Jack Barrymore appeared as the *Clown*.

Unless a love of theatrical life is still strong in Lionel Barry-

more, it will be the last time the sister and two brothers will act together, for he left the stage shortly afterwards to study art in Paris. Ill health and a taste for the brush and crayon led him to desert the profession



PHOTO BY HALL

Ethel Barrymore as the *Charwoman* in "The Silver Cup"

of his family at a time when he was beginning to make a name for himself. He first appeared, a few years before, in "Cumberland, '61." As the Italian organ-grinder in John Drew's production of "The Mummy and The Humming-Bird" he gave such a good account of himself that he was entrusted, the season following, with the leading rôle of the pugilist in Augustus Thomas' clever comedy, "The Other Girl," which was the last character in which he appeared.

Jack Barrymore, youngest of the trio, is just at the threshold of his career. He closely resembles Maurice Barrymore, both in appearance and manner. He is a fine looking young fellow, with a good deal of dash and distinction. He first appeared with his father in vaudeville, during the year preceding the beginning of the mental disorders that resulted in the latter's death. Like Lionel, he also has a decided talent for drawing. Before he took up theatrical life seriously he won no mean reputation as a cartoonist, a branch of art which he studied in England and France and practiced in this country.

His stage *début* was made in "Glad of It," an unsuccessful farce by Clyde Fitch. With William Collier, eighteen months ago, he went on a tour of Australia in

Richard Harding Davis' farce, "The Dictator." He is now experienced and capable enough to succeed Arnold Daly in the leading rôle of "The Boys of Company B" which, in Mr. Daly's opinion, at least, is a great distinction. The piece, though, is one of the minor products of the last theatrical season.

Whatever may be the estimate placed upon the acting of the granddaughter and grandsons of famous Mrs. John Drew—and it surely has the element of popularity—the three representatives of our distinguished and honored actor-family may always be sure of cordial interest from the great vast of American theatergoers. Ethel is a flower of radiant young womanhood, well qualified to adorn whatever place in domestic life Fate may elect her to fill. On the stage she is gracious and charming, but greatness as a dramatic artist is not likely to fall to her lot. Her brothers are

versatile and talented. They will make their marks either on the stage or in the studio.

Perhaps the most praiseworthy trait of the trio is their loyalty to one another. They have been sorely tried in the fires of family affliction and have stood shoulder to shoulder through it, each brave, steadfast, and self-reliant, each helpful to the others.



PHOTO BY SARONY

Lionel Barrymore as the *Organ Grinder* in "The Mummy and the Humming-Bird"